Imprimatur.

Guil. Needham, R. R. in Christo P. ac D. D^no. Wilhelmo Archiep. Cant. à Sacr. Domest.

Ex Æd. Lamb. Januarii 18. A.D. 168⅔.

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A

DIALOGUE

BETWIXT TWO

PROTESTANTS,

(In Anſwer to a

Popiſh Catechiſm,

CALLED,

A Short Catechiſm againſt all Sectaries)

Plainly ſhewing,

That the Members of the Church of *ENGLAND* are no Sectaries but true Catholicks; and that our Church is a ſound part of Chriſt's Holy Catholick Church, in whoſe Communion therefore the people of this Nation are moſt ſtrictly bound in Conſcience to remain. pr: 2: 5: 6.

In Two Parts.

If any man preach any other Goſpel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accurſed, Gal. 1. 9.

The Third Edition Corrected.

(90 LONDON, Kenyon

Printed for *Samuell Tidmarſh*, at the *Kings-Head* in *Cornhill*, near the *Royal Exchange*, 1686.

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(In Answer to a

Popish Catechism,

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A Short Catechism against all Sectaries,)

Plainly shewing,

That the Members of the Church of ENG-
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and that our Church is a foundation of Christ
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therefore the people of this Nation are most strict-
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In Two Parts.

If any man preach any other Gospel unto you than that you have received, let him be accursed, Gal. 1. 9.

The Third Edition Corrected.

LONDON,

Printed for Samuel Gilbertson, at the Bible-Head in
Cheapside, near the Royal Exchange, 1686.

THE PREFACE.

I *Do not think there needs any excuſe to be made for anſwering a Book written againſt our Religion: If there were, I could truly produce that common one of being put upon it by Friends. For it's now more than a year ſince ſome very worthy Friends (to whom my Obligations are too great to diſpute their Commands) did put into my hands a little Popiſh Book, called,* A Short Catechiſm againſt all Sectaries, *ſaid to be Tranſlated by* C. M. *deſiring me to write a plain Anſwer thereto by way of Dialogue, ſuch as might be fitted for the capacities of common people. In obedience to whom I preſently betook my ſelf to the work, wherein I have proceeded very ſlowly, being daily interrupted with other employments. But now at length having finiſh'd it, I preſent it to the World, heartily wiſhing it may have a ſucceſs anſwerable to the truth and goodneſs of the cauſe I maintain, and to the deſign both of my ſelf in Writing and Publiſhing it, and of my Friends in putting me upon it.*

I am not so vain as to pretend to have said any thing new on a Subject so very common, and which for a long time hath exercised the Pens of very many persons of greatest Wit and Learning, both in our own and other Nations. Let it suffice, what I hope without any vanity may be said, that I think I have here delivered certain and solid Truth in plain and easie Words, that even he that runs may read and understand the same. I can also truly add, that in answering this my Popish Author, I have used all manner of honest and fair dealing, as becomes a sincere Lover of Truth. I have not indeed always followed him word for word, especially not in his second and third Chapters, in the former of which he endeavours to prove, That Protestants *have not the mark of a true Church; in the latter, That the Church of* Rome *hath them. These two I have handled together, and though I have left out much of his reviling Language, which I thought needed no answer, nor deserved any notice; yet I do not know that I have past over any one Argument either there or in any other place. Some perhaps may look on it as a fault that I have often followed him too punctually, which has occasioned the frequent repetition of the same things, but this may be useful to some Readers. If I have not every where quoted his very words (as for the most part I have done) yet I am sure I have never willingly misrepresented*

preſented his ſenſe, nor propoſed his Arguments with diſadvantage, but rather have added what I thought might give ſtrength thereto. And as I know not that I have any where overlooked one Argument without anſwering it; ſo neither have I returned any anſwer, but what in my Conſcience I thought to be juſt and true, and with which my own mind is well ſatisfied. I have not ſo confined my ſelf to this Author, but that I have alſo taken notice of ſome other points which he never mentions. And though I may be far enough from having ſpoken to all that are in Controverſy betwixt us and the Church of Rome, *yet I think I have not wholly omitted thoſe which are of greateſt weight. At leaſt, I am well aſſured that I have ſaid enough to ſatisfy any conſidering impartial perſon, that there is not the leaſt reaſon, why any Man ſhould depart from the Communion of the Church of* England, *and betake himſelf to that of* Rome: *Since the* Romiſh *Church has no manner of Authority over us, and is moreover guilty of retaining and impoſing ſuch groſs and dangerous Errors and Corruptions as render her Communion utterly unlawful and unſafe, even to thoſe who have been born and bred in her boſom. How unreaſonable then is it for us to revolt to her? And indeed my chief deſign in this undertaking is to confirm thoſe of our own Church in ſtrict Communion with it, having little*

hope of bringing over many Proſelytes from the Church of Rome. *Where I can expect but few Readers, I muſt not look for many Converts. Thoſe Guides who are not willing to truſt their People with the Holy Scriptures, which yet they ſay are on their ſide, will be leſs willing they ſhould read the Books of thoſe whom they account their Enemies; and too oft they account us ſo, as the* Jews *did our Saviour, meerly for telling them the truth. But if any of that Perſwaſion ſhould be ſo ingenuous as to give this little Book a fair Reading, and ſhall bring along with him a mind as free from paſſion and prejudice as the Author had in Writing it, I dare ſay that it will either perſwade him to become a Member of our moſt excellent Church, or at leaſt convince him, that we who are already ſo, have great reaſon not to depart from it: Since this our departure, beſide all other faults involved in it, would render us guilty of an apparent Schiſm. And this guilt I reckon is moſt juſtly chargeable on the* Papiſts *amongſt us: And not on them only, but alſo on thoſe* Proteſtant *Diſſenters (as they are commonly called) of what Denomination ſoever, who ſeparate from us into diſtinct Societies, which they ſet up in oppoſition to our Church as by Law eſtabliſhed. For if in this Church all things needful to Salvation are afforded, and no ſinful condition impoſed, then do they make a cauſeleſs, ſinful ſeparation,*

who

who withdraw from its Communion. Neither can these our Diſſenters juſtly plead the ſame Arguments for their Separation from us, that our Church can for its withdrawing from the Church of Rome, *or rather for Reforming her ſelf from the corruptions of that Church, as I have briefly ſhewed toward the end of this Treatiſe. They who would ſee this more fully demonſtrated, let them read a Diſcourſe which purpoſely handles this Subject, being one of the Caſes lately Written, as is ſaid, by ſome of the* London *Miniſters. And indeed I ſcarce know any Books that I would ſooner recommend to the Common Reader, for his direction in theſe matters, than all thoſe Diſcourſes, which treat of the ſeveral points in difference betwixt our Church, and the Non-conformiſts, and alſo of ſome of thoſe betwixt us and the* Papiſts: *And are generally Written with ſuch clearneſs of judgment, and with ſuch calmneſs and good temper, as may render them more acceptable and more uſeful, through God's Bleſſing, to thoſe for whoſe ſake they were written.*

But whilſt we are thus engaged in diſputes and controverſies, let us look well to the temper of our minds, and take great care that we loſe not peace or charity, whilſt we are enquiring after and contending for the truth. Let us have as great an averſion as we will from the errors, the ill principles and practices of any ſort of Men; but let us

not

not have the leaſt enmity to their Perſons upon any pretence whatever. Let us pity them, and pray for them, and do all we can in our ſeveral places to inſtruct them, to reduce and reform them: but let us not hate or envy them, nor rail upon or revile them, nor wiſh them or do them any hurt, nor rejoyce in any miſchief that befals them, nor vex our ſelves at their proſperity, or with the fears and forethoughts of it. Let us not fret our ſelves in any wiſe to do evil.

For that end above all let us take heed of ſuch a fierce and furious zeal as tends to diſturb the peace of Church and State. That's no true zeal for Religion which produces ſuch ill effects, but rather a zeal for opinions and parties, or for outward advantages, and proceeds from pride, envy, revenge, diſtruſt of God, and ſuch like evil principles. But the wiſdom which is from above is pure and peaceable. *True Religion inſpires the breaſts of Men with meekneſs and patience, humility and charity, renders them calm and quiet, gentle and tractable, eaſie to be intreated, and eaſie to be governed. Next to piety to God, what greater duty of Religion than Loyalty to our Prince as the Miniſter of God? How then can Religion be expreſt or promoted by Sedition and Rebellion, any more than by curſing and ſwearing? and ſuch like profaneneſs? He that talks of Rebelling for his Religion, has loſt what he contends for before he begins the conteſt. For what Religion has he who reſiſts*

the

the Ordinance of God? And this (as we are taught by God himself) he does who resists that lawful authority which God hath set over him. But we must shew that we Fear God *by* Honouring the King, and loving all Men, *especially our* Christian Brethren. *This is the language of Holy Scripture, and this is the Doctrine of our Church.*

Let us then live in peaceable Communion with this Church, and let us in all respects behave our selves in so loyal and dutiful a manner toward our King, as she instructs and obliges us to do; even so that we may deserve the Character which one of the Ancients in his Apology for the Christians, gives of them, viz. That a Christian is an enemy to no Man, much less to his Prince. *Thus ought we to practise if we will be true to our profession. For the Religion of our Church (as I have often said and fully proved in the following Discourse) is no other than the Christian Religion, the very same which our Blessed Saviour and his Apostles taught, without either Popish or Phanatical corruptions and additions.*

And as in other points, so particularly in this of obedience to Magistrates, she inculcates what Christ hath commanded, Give unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsars; *and that of St.* Paul, Let every Soul be subject to the higher Powers, *&c. even Bishops and Priests as well as Lay-men; and this* not only for wrath but conscience sake. *Or as St Peter,* Submit to every ordinance of Man for

for the Lords-ſake. *This was the Doctrine and practice of the Apoſtles, and of the Primitive Chriſtians in the firſt and pureſt Ages, when they had the greateſt temptations to the contrary even in times of hotteſt perſecution; and this not for want of ſtrength (as* Bellarmine *to their great diſhonour, would have it thought,* Lib. 5. de Rom. Pont. Cap. 7.*) but out of obedience to Gods commands and faith in his promiſes. But in ſucceeding ages of greater proſperity, as the Church declined from her purity in many other reſpects, ſo alſo in point of ſubjection and obedience to Governours. Then began Prelates to contend with Princes, and the Pope to ſet himſelf againſt, yea above the Emperour. Then by degrees he claim'd a power of depoſing even Kings for what he ſhall judg hereſie, and of abſolving Subjects from their Allegeance, (which by the way,* Bellarmine *very finely compares to that power which the Spirit ought to have over the fleſh.* Lib. 5. de Rom. Pontif. Cap. 6.*) Then were the Clergy exempted from the juriſdiction of the Civil Magiſtrate, with many other encroachments upon the rights of Princes, which they of the Church of* Rome *were eſpecially guilty of. But it was the deſign of our pious Reformers to remove theſe as well as other abuſes, and to reſtore Religion to its Primitive purity as far as poſſible. And this they have done, as in many other inſtances, ſo particularly in aſſerting the juſt power and prerogative of Kings; ſtrictly obli-*

obliging all the members of the Church, whether Clergy or Laity, to yield all that homage and honour, that obedience and subjection, which by the plain dictates of reason and nature, and by the express Laws of God in Holy Scripture, are most justly due to them. And as it was the glory of the Primitive Church, so has it been of ours, ever since the happy time of our Reformation, that she hath always maintained her Loyalty and Allegiance untainted and unshaken. And hath fixed it on such principles as will make it firm and steady in all times, and under all Princes, on such as made the Primitive Christians obedient to their Emperours, whether Heathen or Christian, Arrian or Orthodox; even on the principles of Religion and Obedience to Almighty God, who hath set up Kings as his Vicegerents, and hath expressly commanded us to reverence and obey them as such, threatning damnation to them that resist, and promising an eternal Kingdom of Glory to the meek and peaceable, and to the patient sufferer for righteousness sake. This, I say, is Primitive Christianity, and this is the true Protestant *Doctrine of our Church, taught by our first Reformers, and by their genuine successors ever since. So that it seems not without reason that several learned Men make this a chief distinguishing character of a* True Protestant (*without an Irony*) *that he owns the Kings Supremacy, as our Church has defined it. I am sure he that denies it, so far*

agrees

agrees with the Papists. *Wherefore if we would restore due honour to the name of* Protestant, *which by the abuse of pretenders, hath of late been exposed to derision and contempt, let us live according to the Doctrine of our Church; whilst we profess our selves zealous for Protestant Religion, and cry out bitterly against Popery, let us take heed of embracing some of the vilest principles and practices of it, such as were broached and maintain'd chiefly by their furious* Hildebrands, *and some of the worst Men amongst them, I mean their Doctrine of resisting and rebelling against lawful Soveraigns upon pretence of Religion and the honour of God, for the defence of his Church, and the carrying on his cause. The Holy God needs not the wickedness of Men to defend any cause of his; nor is Religion like to be secured by irreligious means; nor Gods honour promoted by a contempt of his Authority in disobeying his commands. True Religion will make us impartial and uniform in the performance of our duty, and teach us to have respect to all Gods Commandments, to the fifth as well as to the first or second; so that we shall no more dare to rebel against our lawful Soveraign, and set up an Usurper, than to disown the true God, and worship an Idol.*

But I have been longer on this Subject than I intended, and therefore shall hasten to conclude this Preface as I have done my Book, with a most serious

rious and earneſt exhortation to the Reader, that above all things he be careful to lead an univerſally religious and good life, giving in the firſt place to God the things that are Gods, and then to Cæſar the things that are his. *Let God be all in all to our Souls, and let his Authority wholly govern and ſway us in the whole courſe of our lives. Let us ſtudy to know his will as he has plainly revealed it in his holy Word, and let us moſt ſtrictly and faithfully comply with it in all things. Never let the hopes of any worldly advantage, or the fear of any loſs or ſuffering draw us into the wilful commiſſion of any ſin, or into the wilful neglect of our duty. Neither the commands of the greateſt Monarch, nor the example of the multitude will be any excuſe for going againſt the light of Gods Word, and our own Conſciences. There is not the leaſt doubt of it but that God muſt be obeyed rather than Man, when their commands do indeed thwart and contradict each other. Gods favour is more to be deſired than all the riches and honours of the World, and his wrath more to be feared than all the miſeries and ſufferings of this life.* What will it profit a Man to gain the whole World and loſe his own Soul? *But as no pretence of Loyalty and Obedience to Kings will at any time juſtifie our breach of Gods commands, who is the King of kings, ſo neither will the pretence of Religion any more warrant our reſiſtance of lawful Authority. If we cannot obey*

with

with a good conscience, then we ought to suffer with quietness and patience. This is every where the Lesson which the Gospel teaches; and which is more especially recommended to us by the example of our Blessed Lord and Master; and if ever we hope to live and reign with him hereafter, we must now deny our selves and take up our Cross and follow him; *even in meekness and patience must we follow him as well as in righteousness and mercy, purity and temperance, or any other graces. Tea by this means we shall best consult for the present safety and honour both of our selves and our Religion.* Who will (*or what can*) harm us if we be followers of that which is good? *This will incline Kings to be Nursing Fathers to the Church, when the Church trains up her Children in obedience to God and the King. Above all, this will procure the blessing and favour of Almighty God, wherein consist all our safety and felicity. We may hope still to enjoy his Presence and his Gospel, whilst we bring forth such good fruits of it, and* walk worthy of the Lord in all well-pleasing. *He will continue our peace and prosperity so far as he sees good for us, and will suffer nothing to befall us but what shall make for the interest of Religion and our own truest advantage.* Say to the righteous it shall be well with him, *whether in peace and prosperity, or in sufferings and adversity. But let us remember St.* Peter's *advice* (1 Pet. 4. 15.) *to* beware of suffering as busie

busie bodies or evil doers, *as factions and seditious, as Rebels and Traytors. They only who* suffer for righteousness sake may glorifie God on that behalf. *They alone with confidence may* commit themselves to him, *who are exercised* in well-doing.

To him therefore, the only wise, the great and good God, let us freely and chearfully commit both our souls and bodies and all our concerns, whether publick or private: banishing from our minds those faintings and despondencies, those fears and jealousies, which first disturb the peace of our own breasts, and then too often that of the publick. Let us but see to do our own duty with faithfulness and diligence, and then let us possess our souls in patience, *being assured that* all the ways of God are mercy and truth; *and all his Providences how strange soever they may seem to us, shall in the issue sweetly conspire to fulfil his promises, and accomplish his designs of love to all that truly fear and serve him. Let us look well to the Government of our own spirits and passions, of our tongues and our lives, and then let us leave the Government of the World to the God that made it, who is the absolute Lord and Ruler over all, in whose hands are all the hearts and the affairs of Men, and who can turn and order all as he will, and he will do what he sees best and most conducing to the glory of his own name, and the good of his Church; which is a thousand times dearer to him than it*

can be to us. Wherefore let us ſincerely make Gods Glory our End, and his Word our Rule, and continue ſtedfaſt in communion with our Church which teaches us ſo to do, and then we can never be utterly defeated, nor need we ever be much dejected. Truth and goodneſs are moſt ſtrong and invincible things, and will certainly at laſt prevail and triumph over error and wickedneſs. And all that do with courage and honeſty engage in their ſervice ſhall never receive any real hurt, but are certain to come off with victory and honour. Even now the ſpirit of God and of glory reſteth upon them, *and dwelleth in them, filling them with* joy unſpeakable and full of glory. *And at length they ſhall be exalted to thoſe glories and joys, thoſe Crowns and Scepters, which are reſerved in Heaven for Chriſtian conquerors, even for ſuch as have managed their warfare, and gain'd their conqueſts, not by diſturbing the peace, nor by doing evil to any Man, but by patient ſuffering of evil done to them, and* by patient continuance in well-doing.

THE

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A

DIALOGUE

BETWIXT TWO

PROTESTANTS

(In Answer to a

Popish Catechism,

CALLED,

A Short Catechism against all Sectaries.)

PART I.

Advertiſement.

THere is lately publiſhed by the ſame Author, *The Chriſtian Monitor*, Containing an Earneſt Exhortation to an Holy Life. With ſome Directions in order thereto. Price 3*d*.

A

DIALOGUE

BETWIXT A

Teacher and a Learner.

CHAP. I.

Concerning the true Church and the Marks of it, and first of its Unity.

Learner, *SIR, I live in a place where there are many of those who call themselves* Roman Catholicks: *and though I care not much for disputing with them, for I seldom find any thing comes of it but anger and ill words, yet I cannot always avoid it: For some of them are my near Relations, and they sometimes put Books into my hands, and sometimes bring their Priest along with them to convince me; and are still earnestly urging me to change my Religion, and to forsake the Church of* England, *telling me plainly that no Salvation is to be had out of the Church of* Rome.

Teacher. That I know is their common Doctrine, but it is so very unreasonable, and so horridly uncharitable, that this alone were enough to keep a Man from

from becoming a Papist; since if he thorowly embrace their principles, he must condemn all but those of their own way. And believe it, they had need to consider well how they can hope for mercy themselves, who pass so severe a sentence upon others. But thanks be to God, whatever they talk of St. *Peter*'s Keys, they are not hereafter to be our Judges, nor are salvation and damnation at their disposing. That God who will judge both us and them according to his own Gospel, will one day justifie and acquit thousands whom they have condemned. And therefore never be daunted by their insolent language and heavy censures. The very same you may sometimes hear from *Quakers* and others of the vilest Sects. For still the less reason, the more wrath and confidence, that by bold and threatning talk they may fright people into their way, when they want good Arguments to perswade them.

L. *I believe it is so, yet I'le confess to you I am sometimes a little puzled with some of their subtle discourses: and therefore I would desire you to furnish me with plain answers to the chief of those arguments which they commonly insist on. These I think I can pretty well remember, having heard them so often; but to help my memory, I have brought with me a little Book wherein they are contained, and from thence shall propose them.*

T. I shall readily give you my assistance herein: Let me hear then how do they use to assault you?

L. *Those I have met with do commonly begin with telling me (as I find it here also in some of the first pages of this their Book) That there is but one Lord and one Faith, one Religion, and one Church, wherein a man can be saved, as there was but one Ark of* Noah, *wherein he and his family were preserved.*

T. We

T. We easily grant that there is one true Religion, even that which Christ hath revealed, and is therefore called the Christian Religion; and there is one Catholick Church, *viz.* the whole body of Christian people who embrace this Religion. But there are many particular Churches which hold this same Faith, as of old the Church of *Jerusalem*, of *Antioch &c.* so now of *England*, of *Scotland*, *&c.* What then can they infer hence to their purpose?

L. *That as* Turks *and* Jews *cannot be saved, so no more can Hereticks.*

T. It still beseems us to be more careful for the saving of our own souls, than hasty in condemning of others. Wherefore let us leave the condition of such who never heard the Gospel, nor had any opportunity of hearing it, to the wise and just Judge of all the Earth, who will do right to all. As for Hereticks, they are such as deny some essential part of the Christian Faith, and therefore properly speaking are not Christians. But what's all this to us?

L. *They say that we of the Church of* England *are Hereticks, out of the Catholick Church, and therefore cannot be saved.*

T. Say it they commonly do, but are never able to prove it, since we believe the whole Religion of our blessed Saviour contained in the holy Scriptures: We receive the ancient Creeds of the Church wherein is contained the summ of this Religion. How then are we Hereticks?

L. *Because we are not of the* Roman *Church, which is the Congregation of those who own the Bishop of* Rome *to be Christs Vicar, and the visible Head of his Church upon earth, which Congregation they say is the Catholick Church, and the only true way to salvation, and they who are not of this communion are Hereticks and Sectaries.*

T. This

T. This is the current Popish doctrine, but had it been the opinion of the Primitive Church in the Apostles days or soon after, surely they would have given some such a definition as this of the Catholick Church, or at least have call'd it the *Roman* Catholick Church; (as Papists now do) but it's neither so called in the Creed, nor this article so explained by any Christian Writer in those days or long after.

L. Who then are to be reckoned as members of the Catholick Church?

T. Even all good Christians through the whole World that do sincerely believe and obey the Gospel of our blessed Saviour. These are the true members of his Church, and all who profess to do so are the outward visible members of this Catholick Church. And in this sense we acknowledge (with your Author) that Christ hath always had a visible Church on Earth, and will be with it to the end of the World, nor shall the Gates of Hell be able to prevail against it. Nor do we say (as he charges us) that the whole Church has been lost or put out; but particular Churches in this place or that, as at *Jerusalem*, at *Rome*, or any otherwhere, may fall into great decay, and at length into utter ruin. Yet still Christ will have a Church upon earth, still there will be Men professing Christianity, to whom both Heathens, Jews, and all Infidels ought to joyn themselves.

L. Since then the Catholick Church signifies the whole society of Christian people where ever scattered over the face of the earth, it hence appears that they who assert the Church of Rome *to be this Catholick Church, do thereby declare that there are no true Christians in the World but the Papists (as we use to call them) which seems to me very strange Doctrine. But yet may not a particular Church be in some sense stiled Catholick?*

T. Yes

T. Yes properly enough as it is a part of the Catholick Church, holding the same faith with it, and not schismatically dividing from it. And thus of old the Church of *Rome* might be stiled Catholick, and so might the Church of *Ephesus*, of *Antioch*, or any other place, to distinguish them from Hereticks and Schismaticks that made factions and parties in their several Churches, and separated from their own lawful Bishops and Pastors.

L. Are not those Christian Churches which are commonly called Reformed Churches, parts of the Catholick Church?

T. Yes they are the best and soundest parts of it.

L. But why are they called Protestant and Reformed?

T. Not to trouble you with the first particular occasion of the name Protestant, they are now generally stiled so because they protest against the errors and corruptions of the *Roman* Church, and have Reformed themselves from the same, according to the primitive pattern laid down in Holy Scripture. So that when you hear tell of the Protestant Religion, or Reformed Religion, you are not to understand thereby any new Religion distinct from Christianity, but only the old Christian Religion in its native simplicity and purity, separate from all Popish additions. Nor do we say (as I have told you) that the Church was lost and now lately found out; but this we say, that it was greatly corrupted, especially in these Western parts of the World, over which the Bishops of *Rome* had by ill arts usurped an authority. From which Usurpation our Rulers most justly and regularly delivered themselves, and afterwards with great care and consideration reformed our Church from those corruptions which were chiefly introduced and supported by that authority.

L. But they of that Church use to tell us (and so does my

my Author here) that all who are not of their communion are Sectaries, to whom by no means do agree the marks of the true Church, which yet they say are all of them evidently to be found in theirs.

T. Nothing more common, than for Adversaries to give one another very ill names, and that shall serve for half a confutation amongst ignorant people. But names alter not the nature of things: And as zealously as they of *Rome* do affect the name of Catholicks, I doubt not but upon search they will be found as notorious Sectaries as any in Christendom, whilst many of those whom they brand with that infamous title will appear to be true Catholick Christians, if there now be, or ever were any such in the World. And in order to the proof of this, pray let me hear what are those marks of the true Church?

L. *They are said to be chiefly four, that it is* One, Holy, Catholick, *and* Apostolick *Church; and this, say they, cannot be said of any Protestant Church, and therefore not of our Church of* England, *which is by them reckoned among Sectaries.*

T. By these marks let us be tried. Only take notice that no one particular Church can be stiled *the* Catholick Church, as if a part was the whole. But I say the Church of *England* (which we are now chiefly concern'd to vindicate) is a true and sound part of this One, Holy, Catholick and Apostolick Church, and all the marks of a true Church do much more clearly and fully agree to it than to the Church of *Rome.* But let me hear what they object to the contrary.

L. *First they say it is not* One, *that is, it is not united, because there are so many divisions in it. Some will be Protestants, some Presbyterians, others Independents, Anabaptists, Quakers, &c. Nor can they be one, whilst they acknowledg not one Head to determine Controversies. Whilst*

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on the other hand the Papists pretend that they have this one Head, one Faith, the same Sacraments, and so are all of one Religion, and therefore having so much unity, are to be own'd by this mark for the true Church, &c.

T. In answer to this consider (1) That it cannot with any pretence of reason or Scripture be made the mark of a true Church, that there shall be no divisions in it. For were there not some to be found in the best and purest Churches immediately planted by the Apostles themselves? As particularly in the Church of *Corinth*, for which they are severely reproved, 1 *Cor.* 1. 10, 11, *&c.* (2) Much less doth it become those of the Church of *Rome* to accuse others of divisions, who have more and greater amongst themselves than can be found, I believe, in any other Church in Christendom. They talk of one Head, but sometimes they have had two or three Popes at once, and that for several years together. They are divided in points fundamental to their own Church, as whether the Pope be above a General Council, or the Council above the Pope. Nor are they any more agreed where the Infallibility, of which they boast so much, is seated, than about the Supremacy; whether it be in the Pope, or in a General Council, or in both together: Yea, some say 'tis neither in one or the other, nor in both united, as considered apart from the rest, but in the whole body of the faithful, as by them Religion is convey'd from one generation to another. And are they not much better for an Infallible Judge of controversies, whilst they are not yet agreed who he is, and where this Infallibility is to be found? In a multitude of other points are they divided, as learned Writers of our Church have shewn at large; and with great probability have some asserted that they hardly agree universally amongst themselves in any Doctrines but those

those wherein they agree with us. (3) But again were they never so well united amongst themselves, yet is this but the agreement of a Sect with it self, and is far from proving them to be therefore the Catholick Church, or any sound part of it. As if suppose all the *Quakers* were perfectly agreed together in all opinions, and imagin their number was as great as the Papists, are they therefore to be reckoned the Catholick Church, because forsooth they are *One* amongst themselves? Surely no, since by their errors and their Schism they divide themselves from all other Christians. Thus, whilst Papists are united in owning the Pope to be Christ's Vicar on Earth, and the Supreme visible Head over the whole Christian Church, they do hereby only make a Sect or faction, let their number be never so great. And by this means as well as many other ill opinions and practices, which are imposed on the members of their Church, they do separate themselves from all other Christans in the World, who disown this Universal Headship of the Pope with the rest of their errors.

L. *But they boast much of the Union of their Church, because say they, go where you will, you shall find the same Worship, the same Mass, and this frequented in all places, where their Church is owned by the members of it.*

T. Still this is but an Union amongst themselves; such, I say, as any party may have. *Quakers* for instance may go to *Quakers* Meetings where ever they travel, and yet still remain a Schismatical party. And though I lay no great stress upon it, yet formerly even in the Church of *Rome* (however it is now with them) they have had much variety in their publick Offices, according to the different Usages of different places. But still I say, be they never so perfectly agreed in their own way of worship as well as in Doctrine, there

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is nothing in this to prove them the *One Catholick Church:* Nay it does not so much as prove them to be *One* with it as a sound part thereof, except their Doctrine and Worship be such as agrees with that of the Catholick Church in all ages. For any party, I have told you, may agree among themselves, even whilst they are schismatically divided from others.

L. *But they say our Church of* England *is not thus united, because many separate from her Prayers and Sacraments.*

T. And what, is there no Unity therefore amongst the members of our Church, because there are some who through peevishness, weakness, or any other cause separate from it? Does not the main body of the People of this Kingdom, through God's mercy, joyn in Religious Communion, and can freely resort to any Parish Church where they happen to be? If some that live in the Nation will not thus joyn, is that an argument against the union of those that do? In some Popish Countries are there not many thousands who separate from the Church of *Rome?* And do they take that for a good Reason to prove them not to be united who joyn with it? I trow not, but yet it may do much to prove there is little true union amongst them, to consider by what means they are held together, *viz.* partly by force and violence (at least in many places) and partly by keeping the people in ignorance. And is it not a fine kind of union, think you, to have Men chain'd together in Iron fetters, and kept in a dark Dungeon, where they are not able to stir a foot from each other, had they never so much mind? And had the people in *Italy* and *Spain* but more light and more liberty, you would quickly see what vast numbers would depart from their communion there, as they have done in other places. But ignorance is the bond of their Union, as well as the Mother of their Devotion.

L. *Yet is there nothing more common with them than to cry up the Unity of their Church, and to exclaim againſt the Diviſions which they ſay are in ours.*

T. They exclaim againſt them, whilſt more ways than one they endeavour to promote them. They uſe alſo their utmoſt arts to aggravate and enhance them, and make them be thought much greater than they are, whilſt they cunningly endeavour to leſſen and conceal thoſe amongſt themſelves, which yet I reckon to be far greater than even thoſe betwixt our Church and the generality of ſuch as diſſent from it. And ſometimes theſe their differences have been managed with as much heat and violence, and have produced fighting and Bloodſhed, as you will find largely related in the moſt learned Dr. *Stillingfleet's* Diſcourſe on that ſubject. But beſides this, certainly the Papiſts of all people have little reaſon to cry out againſt Schiſmaticks and Sectaries, ſince they themſelves will be found to be as great Schiſmaticks as any at this day amongſt us, and as dangerous too, if we may judge of them by their principles. For beſides that the whole Popiſh Church may juſtly be accounted Schiſmatical in dividing it ſelf from the reſt of Chriſtendom (of which more hereafter) thoſe of them who live amongſt us do wholly ſeparate from our Church, and paſs a much more heavy doom upon us than I think moſt of our other Sectaries do. For theſe do generally acknowledge the Church of *England* to be a true Church, and grant her Doctrine to be ſound and good, and profeſs to hold communion with us in Faith and Love, whilſt they withdraw from us on account of ſome Modes and Ceremonies in Divine Worſhip. Thus it is with many of them, but now the Papiſts do plainly declare againſt our Church and Miniſters, that we have no true Faith nor Sacraments, nor Chriſtian

stian virtue or piety, but are cursed Hereticks in the most miserable state of damnation. And all this chiefly because we submit not to the usurpation of a foreign power, that of the Pope, which at least in Spirituals they prefer before the power of our own Governours, whether in Church or State. So that in obedience to the Bishop of *Rome*, who hath no more to do in *England* than the Bishop of *Jerusalem*, they make no scruple of disobeying the King and Bishops, and all the Laws of the Land; at least I say in all matters that relate to Religion. And whilst the Pope himself is Judge in the case, what may he not hook in under that pretence? And therefore may the Papists amongst us justly be reckoned as Schismaticks, whilst they refuse communion with that Christian Church where they live, which is a sound part of Christs Catholick Church, and requires nothing unlawful of its members. And very dangerous they are because they prefer a foreign Usurper before all the power of our own Church. Especially if you also consider the current Doctrine of their Church, that this same Usurper the Bishop of *Rome* has power to depose Heretical Kings (as they account ours) and to absolve their subjects from their Allegiance, and dispose of their Kingdoms to others. And this most intolerable tyranny over Princes have sundry Popes exercised when they have had power in their hands, and have more than once attempted it in these Kingdoms. Yea, to this day many of the rigid and stricter sort of Papists refuse to take the Oath of Allegiance, wherein this extravagant power of the Pope is denyed. Judge then whether I had not reason to say that Men retaining these principles, and on that account rejecting our communion, are themselves such notorious and dangerous Schismaticks as have little reason to accuse others of schisms and divisions.

L. *But though we own not the Pope to be an Infallible Judg of Controversies, have not we sufficient means for union in our Church?*

T. Yes we have so, whilst we acknowledg the Holy Scriptures to be the Infallible Rule of Faith, in which all things necessary to salvation are plainly revealed; and do also grant that the Governours of our Church have power to compose all differences in Religion amongst our selves by proposing Articles of peace, suppressing disputes about obscure and unnecessary matters, and by determining of things indifferent in the worship of God, according to the general rules of Scripture; which principles being heartily embraced, and honestly practised, will procure as much peace and union in every Church as can be expected in this State of imperfection. And by this means, thanks be to God, there is more true Christian unity to be found in our Church than amongst Papists themselves, notwithstanding their Infallible Judg, Pope or Council, or they know not well who. And what appearance of union there is amongst them is to be ascribed rather to the peoples ignorance than to the Popes knowledg, yea to the Inquisition much rather than to his Infallibility.

L. *I am well satisfied in this matter, But before I proceed to the next mark, pray tell me what is that unity which is required in a particular Church to make it lawful for a Man to hold communion with it.*

T. Plainly it is this, that it be in union with the Catholick Church by holding the same faith which it has always held, and using the same worship in all things substantial which it has always used. And thus doth the Church of *England*, whilst it owns the Holy Scripture as the Rule of Faith, and receives the ancient Creeds wherein this faith is briefly comprized; which

Scripture

Scripture and Creeds have been generally received by the Catholick Church in former ages as well as this. And in our Church is eſtabliſhed the ſolemn Worſhip of the true God in the name of Jeſus Chriſt, and here the Holy Sacraments are adminiſtred according to this rule of Holy Scripture, and after the pattern of the Catholick Church in all ages, from which the Church of *Rome* is moſt groſsly degenerated, as you may anon be more fully informed.

L. *But does not the Church of* Rome *receive the Holy Scriptures, and the ancient Creeds that we have? and worſhip the true God in the name of Jeſus Chriſt?*

T. Yes, they do ſo; and thereby they do plainly approve of and confirm what we hold. But then, they have made additions of their own to this Faith, and have brought many corruptions into this Worſhip and thereby have occaſion'd one of the greateſt Schiſms that ever happened in the Church; and are themſelves the Schiſmaticks, becauſe they make unlawful terms of communion, and exclude thoſe who comply not with theſe terms. So far as they are *One* with the Catholick Church, we are *One* with them. So far as they retain that Faith and Worſhip which has ever been approved of in the Church ſince the days of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, we are ready to joyn in communion with them; but the errors and corruptions which in latter times have been added and impoſed, theſe we utterly reject. In theſe we muſt diſſent from them, that it may appear we are *one* with the ancient Catholick Church, which never own'd many of thoſe things which they now impoſe, and we renounce, as I ſhall after ſhew. But let us proceed if you pleaſe to the other Marks.

CHAP. II.

Of the ſecond mark of the true Church, viz. *Holineſs.*

L. *THE next mark of the true Church is that it's* Holy, *which they ſay agrees to their Church, not to ours: Their Doctrine they pretend is holy, not ours; in their Church are multitudes of holy perſons to be found, whole Orders of them; but out of it they ſay there is no true holineſs, no holy people, nay nor can be.*

T. It is a matter to be ſadly lamented by all good Men, that among Chriſtians of what Profeſſion or Church ſoever, there is no more true piety and holineſs to be found; and that generally they are more zealous for promoting their own party and private opinions, than holineſs and righteouſneſs, without which we cannot be ſaved, let the Church we are of be never ſo true, and our opinions never ſo ſound and orthodox. But in this reſpect I do verily think there is no Church in the World more guilty than the Church of *Rome*, nor any that leſs deſerves to be ſtiled an Holy Church. For proof of this I intend not to inſiſt on that general looſeneſs and impiety which abounds in Popiſh Countries, and no where perhaps more than in *Italy* and *Rome* it ſelf, the Seat of his Holineſs (as they ſtile the Pope) and yet a very ſink of all ſenſuality and profaneneſs. But that which I would have you chiefly to conſider is this, That ſeveral of thoſe Doctrines of their Church, which are properly ſtiled Popiſh, and in which they differ from us, do manifeſtly tend to the prejudice and hindrance of an holy life, and do rather ſerve for an encouragement to ſin and wickedneſs. As for inſtance, whilſt they

they abuſe the people with idle Stories of Purgatory, where they may make ſatisfaction for their ſins, and where they ſhall ſometimes finds much eaſe, and at laſt be delivered out by the prayers that are ſaid for them by Prieſts after their death; to whom good ſtore of money muſt be left for that end. How does this tend to harden Men in their ſins, and to prevent their timely reformation, whilſt the hope of a Purgatory takes off the fear of Hell? Thus alſo they teach that Attrition, that is, being ſorry for their ſins for fear of puniſhment, will procure their pardon, if they make confeſſion, and are abſolved by a Prieſt. And at moſt eaſie rates do they grant Abſolutions and Indulgences, which muſt needs make Men much more careleſs of their lives, more bold to venture upon wickedneſs, for which they have a pardon ſo ready at hand.

But beſides theſe and other hurtful opinions, we may plainly diſcern that in the ſeveral branches of Religion, their groſs corruptions have done much to deſtroy all true piety and goodneſs. For inſtance, inſtead of a ſerious, ſpiritual, affectionate worſhip of God, which might help to conform the Souls of Men to the holineſs of that God whom they worſhip, they have invented a World of uſeleſs ridiculous Ceremonies, which turn it into a kind of bodily exerciſe that little profits the Soul. They have publick prayers in an unknown Tongue, where it's enough for the people to be preſent, though they ſcarce underſtand a word; and what benefit can this afford to their minds? Here alſo contrary to Gods expreſs command, they have brought in the worſhip of Images, the Invocation of Saints and Angels, eſpecially of the Bleſſed Virgin; as alſo the adoration of the Hoſt, that is of the conſecrated Bread in their Maſs, all which are horrid impieties. And even a great part of their

private Devotions consists in saying over their *Pater Nosters*, and *Ave Maries* so many times by rote, of which they keep count by a sett of Beads. And is this a due worship of God in Spirit and truth, with affection and reverence, such as our Blessed Saviour enjoyns, and as the very Nature of God requires from all reasonable creatures? Moreover as there is little of true devotion in their worship, so they have done much by other false Doctrines of theirs to destroy righteousness, truth, peace, and charity from amongst Men: to pass by their Doctrines of Equivocation, and mental reservation; many of great note in their Church have taught that no faith is to be kept with Hereticks, and it's well known they have sometimes put it in practice. They exempt their Clergy from obedience to the Civil Magistrate, and teach that it is in the power of the Pope to Excommunicate and Depose Heretical Princes, and to absolve their Subjects from Allegiance to them, who after this (by their principles) may lawfully rise up and rebel against them. Yea in some of their Councils they have decreed that the Rulers who will not root out Hereticks (as they account all that are not of their Church) shall be deprived of their Dominions. And when they have had power in their hands, they have exercised the most barbarous cruelty upon those they call Hereticks, that ever was heard of in the World, both in our own and other Nations, especially where their bloody Inquisition is allow'd. They burn their bodies, and censure their Souls to Hell, and this is Popish charity. This is the Church that boasts so much of her holiness and good works.

But should I go about to tell you what is the Divinity of many of their famous Casuists, especially of the Jesuits, as it's laid open by some of their own Church,

Church, and is to be seen in their Books, and in the present Popes condemnation of some of their grossest Doctrines: if this, I say, should be laid open, you would be amazed to find how there is scarce any sin but with one distinction and evasion or other you might be allow'd to commit it; scarce any duty but you might have a colour for the neglect of it. Amazed one may well be, to find Men calling themselves Christians, yea Doctors of the Church, to allow and defend such practices as a sober Heathen would abhor. Yet this is the Church that is to be known by her Holiness above all other Churches.

L. *Many of these things which you object against their Church I find my Author afterwards to vindicate; but in the meantime he says we Protestants have no holiness in our Church, that the first Reformers were very wicked Men, and so are their followers, and a great many ill things he says of those he calls Sectaries, as guilty of Rebellion, Murders, Adultery, Sacriledg,* &c.

T. As to those who have been really guilty of these or the like crimes, let them bear all the blame which they most justly deserve. As to our own Church it's no way concerned in this charge: no, but let the shame light upon that Church which first taught and practised Treason and Rebellion, Plots and Conspiracies, murdering of Kings, and massacring of their Subjects under pretence of Religion. And if any that are called Protestants have been guilty of such Villanies, they may in respect of these practices and the principles, whence they flow, justly be stiled the Jesuits Disciples, whatever abhorrence they may pretend for other points of Popery.

L. *But he says we take away all fear of God, and obedience to his commands, & all good Doctrine, with more to that purpose.*

T. A plain sign it is that they themselves have no fear

fear of God before their eyes, whilſt they are guilty of ſuch malicious ſlanders and reproaches. Some good pretence they might have for theſe cenſures, if we took away the Scriptures from the people, wherein all good Doctrine and Gods holy commandments are contain'd, and inſtead of theſe ſhould put into their hands lying Legends, deviſed by idle Monks, full of feigned miracles and ridiculous Stories, which tend to nouriſh ſuperſtition and error. But on the contrary, it's well known, that we not only allow to common people the uſe of holy Scripture, but do moſt earneſtly exhort them to be diligent and conſtant in the reading and meditation of it. How then dare they ſay that we take away all good Doctrine? And is not this the chief deſign of the Sermons ſo plentifully preached amongſt us, to explain theſe holy Scriptures, to ſhew the people thence their duty both to God and Man, and to enforce the ſame upon them? To this ſame end are alſo written many excellent Books by the Divines of our Church. Yea ſome done by the more devout Writers of their Church, which do chiefly aim at the promoting of good life, have been tranſlated into our language, are commonly read and well eſteemed among us, ſuch as *Thomas à Kempis*, *Drexelius*, *Sales*, and others. Nothing is more frequently preſt upon us than that above all things we ought to live in imitation of our Bleſſed Saviour and his holy Apoſtles, in the exerciſe of true devotion and piety to God, of righteouſneſs, truth and mercy, to one another, and of purity and ſobriety in our own perſons, which we look upon as the very ſumm of Religion, and the great deſign of the Goſpel according to *Tit.* 2. 11, 12. With us is taught the great obligation that lies upon all Men whether Clergy or Laity to be obedient to the King as ſupreme, and to

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all that are in Authority under him. That we ought to love our Neighbours as our ſelves, keeping faith and truth with all Men, whether good or bad, Orthodox or Heretical, avoiding all equivocation and mental reſervation. With us is taught the excellency and neceſſity of charity, both in doing good to all that need our aſſiſtance, and in forgiving thoſe who have done evil to us, if ever we hope for mercy and forgiveneſs from God. And as many publick good works have been done in this Kingdom ſince the Reformation as can be ſhewn, within the ſame compaſs of years, in times of Popery, though upon better principles. In our Church we are taught to flie from whoredom, drunkenneſs, and all riotous ſenſual courſes; and that not as ſlight and venial faults, but as moſt dangerous and deadly vices. And for the more effectual promoting of holineſs, our Religious Worſhip is framed according to the rules of holy Scripture, directed to God only in the name of his Son Jeſus, not to Angels or Saints. Our Prayers are in a known tongue, that the people may be affected and edified, and as the Apoſtle requires, may be able on good grounds, to ſay Amen. We have the Holy Sacraments of Baptiſm and the Lord's-Supper adminiſtred according to our Saviour's own Inſtitution, and theſe ſtill urged as moſt ſolemn obligations to all piety and holineſs of living, without which the outward peformance will ſtand us in no ſtead. We declare that no pardon for ſin can be obtain'd but on condition of ſincere repentance, and that no repentance is ſincere but what produces reformation and amendment of life, if opportunity be afforded. So that our Doctrine you ſee is the Doctrine of the Goſpel, and the precepts of it are daily inculcated on the people. Our Prayers and Sacraments are framed and ordered according to the rules

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of it; and all most evidently tend to the producing of that holineſs which the Goſpel moſt ſtrictly requires, being a *Doctrine according to godlineſs*, as the Apoſtle ſtiles it. And through God's bleſſing on his own Ordinances, and the endeavours of his faithful Miniſters, there are great numbers amongſt us who do live truly religious Chriſtian, holy lives; as many I am apt to think, as are to be found in any Chriſtian Church throughout the World of the ſame largeneſs with ours. As to the wickedneſs of others, which we juſtly lament, (as good Men in all ages have ſadly lamented the ſame) this is the fault of particular perſons, and not to be charged upon the Church, which owns no Doctrines that promote wickedneſs, much leſs does ſhe require of her members the embracing and profeſſing of any ſuch falſe and miſchievous Doctrines, nor does ſhe impoſe upon them any thing which God has forbidden, nor reſtrain them from any duty which he has commanded. This therefore may ſufficiently ſhew the Holineſs of our Church to be ſuch as that we may lawfully hold communion with it; yea and are bound ſo to do, ſince there is nothing ſinful required of us in order thereto; but here we may be as pious and as holy as in any Church whatever, and I think have as great helps and encouragements thereto.

L. *My Author grants that there are ſome in our Church who appear modeſt and charitable, and ſo there are among the Heathans: but he ſays it's all but outward appearance, ſince we have no true Religion, as he pretends, and therefore can have no true virtue.*

T. How utterly groundleſs and unjuſt is this charge, whilſt (as hath been ſaid before) we do moſt firmly believe in Jeſus Chriſt the Son of God, and from this our belief in him and his holy Goſpel do our works proceed, and out of true love to God and to our brother.

Judge

Judge then whether they who have that faith in Christ which works by love, are to be reckoned amongst Heathens and Infidels? Or rather are not they destitute both of Christian charity and common modesty and ingenuity who talk at this absurd & most malicious rate?

L. *Indeed I see not how they can excuse themselves herein: but yet I hear them boasting often what numbers of Saints and Martyrs they have had in their Church, both in former & latter ages, & will allow no Saints in any other Church but theirs.*

T. As to Saints of latter ages, they keep up the names and tell fine stories of some, of whom it's much doubted whether they ever had a being in the World. But which is far worse, there are some whom they cry up for Saints and Martyrs who died as Rebels and Traytors against their Prince, in a blind, furious zeal for their great Master the Pope. Such was their *Thomas à Becket* formerly, and *Garnet* lately, with others of the like stamp. But as to the true Saints of former ages, though some of them might live in the same places in which they of the *Romish* Church now do, yet are they not to be accounted members of that Church, according to its present constitution, since they were utter strangers to those falshoods & superstitions which are now establish'd amongst them: only they embraced that same pure, plain Christian Religion, which is at this day profest with us, and are therefore rather to be reckoned of our Church than theirs.

L. *This is plain enough: but what say you to the great numbers of Religious people still amongst them,* viz. *those of their several Orders in their Monasteries and Nunneries, that live single lives, being retired from the World, that they may wholly give up themselves to Gods service? for they talk much of these when they boast of the holiness of their Church?*

T. For my part I hope there are some amongst them who deserve the name of Religious, and where there

there is one truly so, I wish there were an hundred. Yea, I would to God that both with them and all other Churches every Man who is called a Christian may walk worthy of his holy profession. I have no desire to make any party of Men worse than indeed they are, nor any delight in representing how bad they be, or are commonly censured at least. And therefore I shall say nothing of all that filthiness and lewdness, which in former times their Monks and Nuns have been severely accused of by some of their own Church; for I care not for raking in such a channel. Nor shall I take notice how much they are degenerated from the first institution of a Monastick life, in which Men were wont to be very diligent and industrious in some honest and useful employment. But yet that you may not be abused by fair shows, and specious pretences, I would not have you think that Men and Women are ever the more holy and religious for leaving their families and callings, and shutting up themselves in Cloisters, there to repeat over so many *Creeds* and *Pater Nosters* in a day. For there is no encouragement given in the Gospel for our entring into such a lazy, retired course of life. Nor is it at all like to the life of our Blessed Saviour and his Apostles; neither do they hereby bring that honour to God, nor that good to the World, which by a more free and active life they might do. So that I doubt not but that in thousands of pious, well ordered families, there is more true devotion, yea more purity and chastity than in most of these their Religious Houses, as they call them.

But beside all this, there is one thing I would have you seriously to consider, that though I grant there may be, and I hope are some Papists truly religious (whether in their Cloisters or out of them) yet it is not as they are Papists, but as they are Christians of the

the ſame faith with us who are reformed from their errors. So that whatever holineſs is amongſt them, it makes nothing for the honour of Popery, (that is of thoſe Doctrines wherein they differ from us) but of Chriſtianity in its purity and ſimplicity as it is profeſt amongſt us. To ſpeak yet plainer if need be, any of them that are truly good, become ſo (through the grace of God) by their firm and effectual belief of the Chriſtian Religion, *viz.* that Jeſus Chriſt is the Son of God, that he died for our ſins, and roſe again for our juſtification, that he will come to judge the quick and the dead, and will ſentence the wicked to everlaſting puniſhment, and receive the righteous to life eternal. Such as theſe are the great truths of our Religion, which being heartily believed, and ſeriouſly conſidered, do by God's bleſſing throughly change mens hearts and lives, and make them truly pious and good. But no body becomes ſo by his believing that the Biſhop of *Rome* is Chriſts Vicar, and has power over all the Princes on earth; that their Church is infallible, and the Miſtreſs of all other Churches; that there is a Purgatory, with the reſt of thoſe Doctrines which they embrace and we reject. Nay theſe opinions with their conſequences rather tend to make Men much worſe than otherwiſe they would have been. Some of them make them more looſe and careleſs in the leading of their lives, and ſome make them moſt cruel and uncharitable to ſuch as differ from them; yea, render them many times diſobedient to their Rulers, and furious diſturbers of the Peace by Plots and Treaſons and Rebellions for the advancing of their Cauſe. True Chriſtianity puts Men upon no ſuch courſes; but theſe are the natural effects of Popery, as has often been verified by ſad experience.

L. *I underſtand you well, and am fully perſwaded that we*

we in our Church do embrace all those Christian Doctrines that tend to the promoting of good life, and do retain none that are an hindrance to it. But what say you to their objections against Calvin *and* Luther, *who, as my Author says, were very wicked Men; and strange stories he tells of them out of* Bolsec, *and other Writers of their Church?*

T. To this I answer, that it sufficiently appears how bad their cause is which must be maintain'd by the most odious lies and forgeries. For there are no Books in the World less to be credited than those which their Monks and Priests have written in praise of those they have Canonized for Saints, and in dispraise of such as they have damned for Hereticks; making the former somewhat more than Angels, and the latter worse than Devils. But as to *Calvin* and *Luther*, some of the more ingenuous even of their own Church have given a fairer Character of them than their lying *Bolsec* and such Authors. And had they but been as zealous for Popery as they were against it, no doubt but they had past amongst them for great Saints with all their faults. But in the mean time, were they really as bad as they falsely accuse them to be, yet are we little or nothing concerned herein, since they were not the Reformers of our Church. Nor yet if they had, is it the goodness of this or that person which we are obliged to defend, but the truth of our Doctrine, and the lawfulness and necessity of our Reformation. Thus they make a great out-cry against *Henry* the Eighth, what a bad Man he was, and what ill designs he had in throwing off the Popes Supremacy, which was the most he did toward the Reformation: but let his designs be what they would, the thing it self was justifiable and good. What if a bad Emperour, upon carnal designs should have suppress Heathenism, and promoted Christianity

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(as *Conſtantine* himſelf was accuſed by ſome) is this any diſhonour to the Chriſtian Religion? But little cauſe have Papiſts of all Men to talk of ill inſtruments, whilſt they may remember from what a Trayterous Murderer and Uſurper, the Pope firſt received the Title of Univerſal Biſhop, for which he had been long quarrelling with the Biſhop of *Conſtantinople*. And however they ſlander *Calvin* and *Luther*, we might with much more reaſon and truth object what kind of creatures multitudes of their Popes have been, whom they own as Heads of their Church, even ſuch monſters of Men for all manner of impiety, filthineſs and cruelty, as the World hath ſcarce ever heard of the like. And this we have from thoſe of their own Church who have written their Lives; and their greateſt Champions, ſuch as *Bellarmine* and *Baronius*, cannot deny it.

L. *But it's further objected againſt* Calvin *and* Luther, *and the firſt Reformers, that they never wrought miracles, to ſhew they had a Commiſſion from God.*

T. Our firſt Reformers never pretended to bring in any new Religion, only they caſt out Popiſh Innovations, which had corrupted and defaced it: and for this they needed no extraordinary Commiſſion from Heaven, nor any miracles to warrant the ſame. For they preached no other but the ſame old Religion which was taught by Chriſt and his Apoſtles, and was abundantly confirmed by the miracles which they wrought long ago. And with us the Reformation was begun and carried on in a juſt and regular manner, by our Rulers in Church and State, who had full authority to make the ſame; even as the Kings and High-Prieſts of old had to reform any abuſes and corruptions which at any time were crept into the *Jewiſh* Church. And as theſe needed no new Commiſſion

from Heaven, no new miracles to authorize them to rectifie disorders, and reform the Church according to the rules of *Moses*'s Law, no more did our Reformers need them, for the removing of those errors and superstitions which had by degrees been brought in contrary to our Saviour's Gospel.

L. *I see no reason indeed why miracles should be expected from them who only cast out new inventions, and keep fast to the old Christian Religion, which hath already been confirmed by so many and great miracles. But yet my Author says that in their Church they have had miracles wrought in all ages, such as curing the blind and deaf, raising the dead, and casting out of Devils, which he accounts to make mightily for the honour of their Saints, and of the Church to which they belong.*

T. In the Primitive times indeed such miracles were wrought for proving of the Christian Doctrine, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and all that he taught, most certainly true: and this Doctrine so confirmed is the Religion which we at this day do openly profess in our Church. But then I utterly deny that ever such miracles were wrought to prove the truth of Popish Doctrins (properly so called) as of Transubstantiation, Purgatory, Invocation of Saints, *&c.* for these were never taught by Christ or his Apostles, and therefore could not receive confirmation from the miracles of their working. As to any that are pretended to be done in the Church of *Rome* for the attesting of these, they are meer cheats and forgeries, or lying wonders agreeable to the Nature of those false Doctrines which they are designed to confirm. And though your Author talks of healing the sick, raising the dead, *&c.* I can hear of no such thing done by any of them amongst us, whatever they may pretend to in Popish Countries, where it's an easie matter for cunning Priests to impose upon credulous people. But were indeed

indeed any ſuch miracles wrought for the proof of Popiſh Doctrines, one would think they ſhould be done amongſt thoſe they call Hereticks, who ſtand in need of ſuch arguments for their conviction, rather than amongſt their own people who need them not.

Great Stories they often tell of their caſting out of Devils; and for this knack are their Prieſts mightily magnified by their deluded followers, and prefer'd before the Miniſters of our Church, who pretend to no ſuch matter. But that this is a groſs cheat ſeems plain enough from hence, that what their Prieſts pretend to in this kind, for all that ever I could hear, is ſtill done in ſome dark corner, amongſt thoſe of their own party, not daring to come into the open light, and ſubmit their proceedings herein to the careful examination of skilful and impartial perſons. Sometimes perhaps they perſwade melancholy people that they were poſſeſt, and they have cured them when they either leave them little better than they found them, or elſe may work a cure by Phyſick proper for that purpoſe. Sometimes it's notorious they have train'd up Cheats for this very purpoſe. A famous inſtance there was of this ſome years ago amongſt our ſelves, *viz.* the Boy of *Bilſon* near *Wolverhampton* in *Staffordſhire*, ſaid to be diſpoſſeſt by ſome Catholick Gentlemen (as they ſtiled themſelves) but to the grief and ſhame of the Authors, the whole Impoſture was diſcovered and publiſh'd to the World by Dr. *Morton*, then Biſhop of *Lichfield* and *Coventry*.

L. *If they indeed had this miraculous power of caſting out Devils, which they make ſuch boaſts of, I wonder they do not ſhew the ſame power in working other miracles as well as this?*

T. 'Tis very true. But this they may chuſe to deal in, becauſe the Impoſture is not ſo eaſily found out. For here they commonly have to do with poor

melancholy people, and with young Women especially, who are sometimes afflicted with strange distempers, which both themselves and their friends may ignorantly fancy to be a possession of the Devil, and so are lyable to be imposed upon either by a subtile, or by a silly Priest, who may perhaps be deceived as well as his Patients; and if they happen to recover, may think he has done great feats by the mighty pains he has taken. And truly the method which they use in these their Exorcisms or casting out of Devils, as it's described in their own Books, is nothing like that of our Blessed Saviour and his Apostles, who by the speaking of a few words did presently cast them forth with authority; whereas Popish Priests make a long work, and keep a great deal of stir about it, using such ceremonies and charms, such strange ways of proceeding as makes it look like some unlawful conjuring: or at best, the whole appears very odd and ridiculous, they having neither any command or example in the Holy Scripture for the using of such practices on this occasion. And one remarkable difference there is which is worth our notice, that in the Primitive times those out of whom the Devils were cast, generally were Heathens or Infidels, who hereupon commonly became Converts to Christianity; whereas now adays those who are said to be dispossest by their Priests, are people of their own party, who may easily be practised upon, or induced to believe whatever their Ghostly Father tells them. But I wonder when we hear of a Protestant being possest with Devils, and dispossest by a Popish Priest, except when there has been much juggling with a new Convert.

L. *I confess I never heard of any. If you please we will now proceed to the next mark of a true Church.*

T. Yes, presently we will: but before I leave this subject

subject of the Holiness of the Church, I would desire you to take notice that every good Christian, who is no Papist, hath in and from himself, as full evidence of the falshood of Popery, as he has of his own sincerity and true Piety; for they declare that no Man has any true Faith or Holiness that is not of their Church, and on this account the current Doctrine amongst them is, That no Man out of it can be saved. But now if you upon a faithful examination of your own heart and life, do find that you do by Gods grace most stedfestly believe the Gospel of our Lord Jesus, and do live in sincere obedience to the precepts of it according to the best of your understanding, you have then at hand a most plain and undeniable demonstration even from this knowledge of your self, that their Doctrine is most false, whilst they confine both Holiness and Salvation to their own party, since you who are not of it do believe and obey the Gospel, and our blessed Saviour hath promised pardon and salvation to all that do so, without requiring them moreover to believe the Pope to be his Vicar, and to submit to all his Doctrines and Decrees. Hence then I say it's very evident to every honest Christian, though no Papist, that he may be holy, and so may be saved without being of the *Romish* Church, and consequently this is not that Catholick Church out of which no salvation is to be had.

L. *This is indeed a plain Argument, which every good Man may fetch from the knowledge of his own faith and godliness; whilst I know and feel that I believe in my Saviour, and truly love and serve him, certainly I may upon good grounds hope for that happiness which he hath promised to all that are so qualified. And whilst I thus know my own sincerity I shall not much be concern'd though a thousand Popish Priests should tell me that I have neither faith nor*

Holineſs, nor can poſſibly be ſaved, becauſe I am not their follower: for ſure the teſtimony of a Man's own conſcience is of much more value than all their cenſures, and Chriſt's promiſes are worthy of more regard, I hope, than the Popes threatnings.

T. I think they are. It may alſo be worth our notice to conſider what a great diſhonour is caſt upon their proſelytes by this Doctrine of theirs: for if there be no true faith or holineſs out of the *Romiſh* Church, then theſe their Converts muſt confeſs that they had neither before they turned Papiſts, but were meer Infidels, and profane ungodly perſons.

L. *This ſeems evidently to follow upon their principles: and I fear it's often too true. For though I will not take upon me to cenſure thoſe whom I know not, yet I muſt confeſs ſo far as I have obſerved, in the place where I live, moſt of thoſe who have been perverted by them were perſons of very ill lives before.*

T. Yea, and more than this, ſo they commonly remain after. For as we ſhall rarely find any perſons of much ſobriety and ſerioufneſs revolt to them from our Church; ſo never did I for my own part know one that became a better Man and ſtricter liver by his turning Papiſt. For whatever they talk of holineſs, their chief buſineſs, like the Phariſees of old, is to make proſelytes to their own party, and then whether after that they grow better or worſe, as to their Morals, is a matter they ſeem not much concern'd about. Get them but once into the boſom of the Church, and their buſineſs is done. As for a poor Proteſtant, let him be never ſo humble and holy, never ſo obedient to his Rulers, and charitable to his brethren, never ſo deſirous to know the whole will of God and to do it, yet there is no help for him, no way but to Hell he muſt go, becauſe forſooth he is an Here-

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tick out of the *Romiſh* Church. But for the Papiſt, the happy Man that has had the good luck to hit into this true Church, they have ſo many tricks and quirks to ſecure him, in his life, at his death, and after it, that let his faults be what they will, it's very ſtrange if he miſs of Heaven, at leaſt after he has taken Purgatory in his way, if he we was very poor; for rich Men may eaſily eſcape that too, or get ſoon out of it if they'll follow the Prieſts directions. Such fine devices they have to give Men a lift to Heaven, without putting them to the trouble of walking in that narrow way of ſerious holineſs which alone leads thither. So that I cannot but ſay (and without any prejudice or partiality I ſpeak it) notwithſtanding all that noiſe and talk of Holineſs in the Church of *Rome*, nothing but Holy Mother Church, Holy Father the Pope, Holy Altars, Holy Images, Holy Water, Holy Croſſes, Beads, *Agnus Dei's*, Reliques, and a thouſand holy trinkets, more, yet I think there is as little true Holineſs of life, and converſation to be found amongſt them as in any Church of the World. Yea, we ſhall often find, that when thoſe of that way are told of the holy Lives of many Proteſtants, or are themſelves exhorted to ſtrictneſs and piety of life, as that wherein true Religion chiefly conſiſts, they will be ready preſently to make a puff at it, as if this was of no value in compariſon of being of the true Church, of the infallible Catholick Church, (as they fondly call their own Sect) as if being in a good Church would ſecure a bad Man, when we are ſo plainly taught, that *without Holineſs no Man ſhall ſee God*, let him be of what Church he will.

Wherefore, to conclude this, remember that ſince in the Church of *England* the holy Goſpel is moſt purely taught, and the holy Sacraments duly adminiſtred, according to our Saviours own inſtitution; and

the members of it are neither required to profeſs any falſhood, or practiſe any evil in order to their communion with it; but on the contrary are moſt ſtrictly enjoyned to be holy in all their converſation, and do here enjoy all manner of helps and advantages thereto; therefore I ſay this is ſuch an Holy Church as that you may and ought to hold communion with it. Proceed we now to the following Marks of the true Church.

CHAP. III.

Of the third mark of the true Church, that it's Catholick.

L. *THE next mark he lays down of the true Church is, that it's Catholick. And here they make great boaſting and triumphing, for they ſay none elſe call themſelves Catholicks but they, nor as they pretend, have any reaſon ſo to do, ſince they tell of vaſt numbers belonging to their Church in all places of the World far and near, and how they convert Heathens, whilſt Proteſtants, they ſay, are but a little handful here and there in corners amongſt a multitude of Catholicks.*

T. As to what they call themſelves it matters little, for be ſure they'l give themſelves good words. Neither is it true that none but they lay claim to that name; for we of this Church do eſteem our ſelves true Catholick Chriſtians, as profeſſing the ancient Catholick faith of Chriſt; and ſo do frequently ſtile both our ſelves and our Doctrine, and with good reaſon, as I doubt not to demonſtrate. As to their great numbers compared to other Chriſtians, ſuppoſe what they alledge were true (as it is moſt falſe) yet is this no ſufficient argument of their being true Catholicks: for that's to be judged by the truth of their Doctrines, and

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not by the number of Profeſſors. For if we ſhould at this rate go to the Poll, and judge of truth by moſt votes, then might the *Mahometans* carry it from Chriſtians. And heretofore the number of the *Arrians* was ſaid to be greater than of the Orthodox. But that's to be accounted a true part of the Catholick Church which profeſſes the Catholick faith, even the ſame Chriſtian Religion which all good Chriſtians in all ages (former as well as latter) and of all Nations, have ever conſtantly profeſt. And by this rule you will find that the Church of *England* is a moſt true and ſound part of the Catholick Church, as profeſſing this ſame Chriſtian faith contain'd in the Goſpel, and ſumm'd up in the Apoſtles Creed. Here you may remember what I have before told you, that it is moſt vain and unreaſonable for any one particular Church to ſtile her ſelf the whole Catholick Church, as if there were no Chriſtians in the World but themſelves. And yet in this ſenſe doth the Church of *Rome* ſtile her ſelf Catholick; the abſurdity of which I have before ſhewed. And there needs nothing more to manifeſt it than this ſingle conſideration, that there are thouſands and millions of Chriſtians, in ſeveral parts of the World, who neither now do, nor ever did own the Supremacy of the Biſhop of *Rome*, which is the great fundamental article of their faith; (to paſs by all others at preſent) and yet all theſe whilſt they embrace the whole Chriſtian Doctrine, taught in the holy Scriptures, are to be lookt on as true Catholick Chriſtians, though they do not believe the Biſhop of *Rome* to be Chriſt's Vicar upon Earth, inveſted with Supremacy over all Chriſtian Churches; for this is a Doctrine which our Saviour never taught his Diſciples. Now without owning this falſe Doctrine a Man cannot be of the Church of *Rome*, according to the Decrees

Decrees of their Popes and Councils; and yet without this, I ſay, a man may receive the whole Chriſtian Religion, as it was delivered by Chriſt and his Apoſtles, and therefore he may be a true Catholick Chriſtian though he be not of the *Romiſh* Church, nor yields ſubjection to it.

L. *This ſeems to me very plain and clear.*

T. But it will appear yet more plain if you conſider, what is a moſt certain truth, that there can be no manner of good evidence given, that the Church of Chriſt for ſome hundred years after our bleſſed Saviours time, did ever receive this Doctrine of the Popes Supremacy, or his Infallibility. Nay our learned Men aſſert that there is not ſo much as any one Chriſtian Writer for at leaſt three hundred years after that time, (ſome ſay four or five) that did ever ſo much as teach any ſuch ſtrange Doctrine as this. How, then, I beſeech you, can the owning of it now be neceſſary to make a Man a Catholick, when the whole Catholick Church for ſome ages after its firſt plantation was a meer ſtranger to it?

L. *I think there is no appearance of reaſon for it.*

T. To this add that the whole *Greek* Church (which was much larger than the *Romiſh* before it was over-run by the *Turks*) ever diſown'd theſe ſame new opinions of the Popes Supremacy and Infallibility, with many others of the ſame ſtamp; neither do they generally embrace them to this day, (though ſometimes the *Romaniſts* have uſed all manner of arts and devices to draw them into a ſubmiſſion) and therefore eſpecially do they account the *Greeks* to be Hereticks and Schiſmaticks, though I know they lay ſome other things to their charge. But beſides the *Greek* Church, there are multitudes of other Chriſtians in ſeveral parts of the World who ſubmit not to the Biſhop of *Rome*. So that

that this boaſt of their vaſt numbers in compariſon of others, is as falſe as it is weak. For according to the computation of many learned Men, if all the Chriſtians in the World were divided into four parts, thoſe who belong to the *Romiſh* Church, where ever they are ſcattered, would not make one quarter of them. With what face then can they pretend that they alone are the whole Catholick Church? As if there were no Chriſtians in the World but themſelves, all the reſt being Hereticks or Infidels, or what they pleaſe to call them.

L. *But they ſay theſe Churches are not Proteſtants.*

T. Whether that name be proper to them or not, it's enough that they joyn with us in the moſt ſubſtantial points againſt the Papiſts. As to the name of Proteſtants, I before told you we do commonly underſtand by it thoſe who have reformed themſelves from the errors of the *Romiſh* Church, and have caſt off her authority, which before ſhe unjuſtly uſurped over them. And in this ſenſe there are a great many large and flouriſhing Churches of them in theſe Weſtern parts of the World, beſides numerous Plantations in the *Eaſt* and *Weſt Indies*, eſpecially in the latter, where many of the Native Heathens have been converted by them. But as to the *Greeks* and thoſe other Churches who never were enſlaved to the Biſhop of *Rome*, though the name of Proteſtant may not ſo fitly belong to them, yet do they agree with us in utterly diſowning the Supremacy of that Biſhop, which is the very fundamental Doctrine of the *Romiſh* Church, by which eſpecially they are diſtinguiſhed from thoſe of all other Communions. As to other points wherein the *Romaniſts* and the Reformed differ, in ſome of them the *Greeks* agree with us, in others with them. But that which is moſt material to my purpoſe is this,

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that all these Churches do hold the same essential Articles of Christian Doctrine with us. They receive the same holy Scriptures, and the same ancient Creeds in which our faith is contain'd; but then they reject many of those additions which in later times have been made by pretended General Councils of the *Roman* Church. Particularly, I say, they deny the Supremacy and Infallibility of that Church, the chief of their new Doctrines. By this therefore judg whose faith is most Catholick or Universal, whilst many of their fundamental Articles (as they esteem them) are rejected by all Christian Churches besides themselves, who are not a fourth part of Christendom, whereas all the Articles of our Faith are embraced by all these Churches, yea even by the Church of *Rome* it self; for as I have often said, the sum of our Faith and Religion is in the Apostles Creed, and this hath been received by the whole Catholick Church in all times and places, and the *Roman* Church also retains it, though she has added new Articles to it. But if she has any good pretence to the title of being part of the Catholick Church, it must be upon account of her receiving and professing this same Christian Faith which we together with the whole Church of Christ do hold, and not on account of those new Articles she has added; which are so generally disown'd both by us and all other Christians in the World except their own party, and which were utterly unknown to the Catholick Church for many ages after our Saviour. Judg then I say whose faith is most Catholick, theirs or ours?

L. *I confess there seems little difficulty in the case, but yet I have heard them oft object that ours is for the most part a Negative Religion, made up of Negative Articles, as that the Pope is not Head of the Church, that there is no Purgatory, no Transubstantiation,* &c. *Now they say we find no such*

ſuch Negative Doctrines in the Catholick Church of old, and therefore we do herein differ from it.

T. To this the anſwer is exceeding eaſie; that we hereby only reject thoſe corrupt additions which the *Romiſh* Church hath made to the ancient Catholick Faith. And their obtruding theſe falſhoods on the World gave occaſion for ſuch Negative Articles as thoſe you mention, which we now look upon as very neceſſary, to ſhew that we keep cloſe to the ancient Rule of faith delivered by Chriſt and his Apoſtles, which Faith we keep entire, and do expreſs it moſt poſitively and plainly, as we have it in the Creed. But the Novelties which the *Romiſh* Church hath added to this, we do utterly deny and reject. As for inſtance, when the Biſhops of that Church, many hundred years after our Saviour, make a new claim of an Univerſal Juriſdiction over all Chriſtian Churches, we think it moſt juſt and neceſſary to diſown all ſuch his Supremacy, as being no where taught in the Goſpel, nor mention'd in the Creed, nor own'd by the Primitive Church. The ſame we declare concerning their other Doctrines of Purgatory and Tranſubſtantiation, that we believe them not. So we alſo teach that there ought to be no worſhip of Images, no Invocation of Saints or Angels, *&c.* and all this for the ſame reaſon, becauſe no where enjoyn'd by our Saviour or his Apoſtles, nor eſtabliſh'd in any of the four firſt General Councils (which we readily embrace) but rather the contrary to theſe is either expreſly taught, or plainly enough inſinuated. And if the Church of *Rome* ſhall ſtill go on to coin new Articles, we ſhall as occaſion is offered, ſtill be as ready to reject them, declaring them to be no part of our Faith. And by this means we do beſt manifeſt our conformity to the Catholick Church in all ages, contenting our ſelves with that

Faith

Faith which she hath ever profest, and transmitted to posterity. And here it is a most ridiculous thing for them to bid us shew where the Church of old held such Negative Articles as we now do, since these were not like to be heard of before the errors that occasion'd them were introduced. As when the Judaizing Christians taught the necessity of keeping *Moses*'s Law, then the Apostles denied it, and establish'd the contrary. Now suppose this error had not been broach'd till some hundred years after, had it not been sufficient for the Christians then to say that the Apostles never taught it, who revealed the whole Counsel of God, and therefore certainly it could be no part of their faith. And so say we of the Doctrines before mention'd, the Popes Supremacy, the worship of the Blessed Virgin, and the like, if these had been so necessary as Papists hold, we should hear of them in our Saviour's Sermons, or in some of the Epistles written by the Apostles to several Churches, or sure we should meet with them in the writings of the most ancient Fathers, or in the Decrees of the first Councils: but since we find no such thing, we may firmly conclude them to be no essential Articles of the Christian Faith. As if now that party in the *Roman* Church which asserts the freedom of the Blessed Virgin from original sin, should so far prevail, as to get a Council, like that packt up at *Trent*, to establish this new Opinion as an Article of Faith, would it not be enough for us to reply, that this is no where to be found in Scripture, or in the Creed, and therefore whether true or false, yet certainly is no article of faith? And thus we shew our selves to be of the same faith with the Catholick Church of old, whilst we embrace the very same Articles which she did, and what more is obtruded upon us as part of the faith, we do constantly

ly reject it, either as false or as unnecessary. Though as to all or most of the points which we thus reject, you will find sufficient evidence against them in holy Scripture, as I shall afterward shew.

L. *But they commonly say that they have only established these new Doctrines in opposition to new Heresies, with which the Church in former times was not troubled, and therefore did not so fully and expresly determine against them, as they now have done: yet they pretend that these their new Articles, were plainly implied and contain'd under some head or other, of ancient Doctrine.*

T. All this is most false and frivolous, since if these new coin'd Articles of theirs had been true, there was the same reason why they should have been taught anciently as well as now, and occasion enough was frequently offered. To instance in one for all: If Saint *Peter* was indeed to have been made supreme Governour of the Christian Church, and the Bishops of *Rome* after him, would not our Saviour have told his Apostles so, when they were contending who should be greatest? And after this in the Primitive times, when there were often hot contentions amongst Bishops and Churches, would they not all have appeal'd to the Pope for the decision of their controversies, and have yielded submission to his sentence, if this had been the current Doctrine of the Church, that he was their supream Governour and Infallible Judge? But alas! we find no such matter. And consider further that when Heresies arose, the ancient Fathers who wrote against them, plainly shew'd how they contradicted the holy Scripture, and the common Doctrine contain'd in the Creed, as explain'd by those who went before them. Thus when the *Arrians* denied the Divinity of our Saviour, the Orthodox both proved it by Scripture, and urged that Article of the Creed,

Creed, that Jesus is the son of God, which they shew'd was still interpreted of his partaking of a Divine Nature, as was afterward therefore more fully expresst in the *Nicene* Creed. But now where can Papists shew Scripture in proof of their Novelties? Or in what Article of the Creed will they prove them to be virtually contain'd, and shew that the Article was so understood by those Ancients who have written Comments on the Creed? How will they by this method make out that the Pope is Christ's Vicar on Earth? not surely because Christ is the Son of God. Or what because there is mention made of the Catholick Church, must that be meant only of the *Roman* Church, so that none must belong to it but those who yield subjection to the Pope? But what ancient Writer did ever thus explain this or the other Article? And to what Articles I beseech you must we reduce those other peculiar Doctrines of theirs, Transubstantiation, Purgatory, *&c.* with the rest of their gross Errors and Innovations? These therefore do we most justly reject as being corrupt additions to the ancient Christian Faith, the common Faith of God's Holy Catholick Church, which we retain firm and entire without adding or diminishing.

CHAP. IV.

Of the fourth Mark of the true Church, that it is Apostolick.

L. *BY your last discourse I am fully satisfied how little reason Papists have to assume and engross to themselves the Title of Catholicks: and that our Church of* England *is a true and sound part of the Catholick Church. And at the same time I do also perceive that the last mark of a true Church doth as properly belong to it,* viz. *that it is Apostolick.*

T. This

T. This is indeed ſo very plain from what hath been ſaid under the former head, that I reckon there is little need to ſpend much time in ſpeaking particularly to it. For, as I have often inculcated, our Church receives all thoſe Doctrines which we are certain were taught by the Apoſtles, that faith which was delivered by them to the Churches which they planted, as it is to be found at large in their writings; and which is ſumm'd up in that which we call the Apoſtles Creed, as being the Summary of their Doctrine. All the Articles of this Creed we do ſtedfaſtly embrace and profeſs; and that in the plain ſenſe of the words, according to the commonly received interpretation of the Church of Chriſt, in the firſt and pureſt ages. And thus our Doctrine is Apoſtolical, ſo alſo is our Government, our Worſhip and Adminiſtration of the holy Sacraments, and therefore our Church doth moſt juſtly deſerve the title of an Apoſtolical Church. For according to the precepts and example of the Apoſtles, we worſhip the true God in the name of his Son Jeſus our only Mediator, and that in a language underſtood by the People. We baptize with water, *In the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghoſt.* And in the Lords-Supper do give both Bread and Wine to the People according to our Saviours own inſtitution. In a word we preach the very ſame Faith, the ſame holineſs and righteouſneſs of life which the Apoſtles did. But on the other hand it's moſt certain, that as to the chief points wherein the Church of *Rome* and we differ, the Apoſtles never delivered thoſe Doctrines, nor enjoyn'd thoſe practices, which are obtruded upon us by that corrupt Church. They never taught that the Biſhop of *Rome* is the ſupreme and infallible Head of the Church. They never taught us to pray to Angels or Saints, no not to the Bleſſed Virgin her ſelf; nor to make Prayers for the Dead,

that they might be delivered out of Purgatory; nor to take away the Cup from the Laity, nor to worship the consecrated Host, to adore Images, or to make any use of them in Religious service. These things with many others now used in the Church of *Rome* were never taught or practised by the Holy Apostles, and therefore so far that Church is not Apostolical.

L. *I do verily believe it deserves not that name with respect to those Doctrines and Practices wherein it differs from us. But I hear them often making great boasts, that theirs must certainly be an Apostolical Church, because an Apostle himself was once their Bishop, even S.* Peter, *and he ordained another Bishop to succeed him, and so hath the succession continued to this day, and therefore sure they must needs be an Apostolical Church.*

T. In answer to this, I shall wave the dispute whether indeed S. *Peter* was ever Bishop of *Rome* or no; and shall pass by all that may be said of the frequent Schisms which have happen'd amongst them, by their having sometimes two or three Popes at once, and that for many years together; nor shall I tell of the fine tricks and politick intrigues of the Cardinals at the Election of a Pope; nor of those vile arts which are frequently used by such as aspire to that dignity, all which tends very much to abate their honour, and shews how unlike they are to the Apostles, whose Successors they boast themselves to be. But waving these things, let me only desire you to consider how little force there is in this argument to prove their Church to be now Apostolical, that once there was an Apostle Bishop of it, except there still continue with them the same truth of Doctrine and purity of worship which the Apostles did at first teach and establish. For let us grant that St. *Peter* and St. *Paul* with other holy Men planted a Church at *Rome*, yet is it not possible that here as well as at *Ephesus*, might afterward

afterward *ariſe men who ſhould teach perverſe things* (as we find it expreſt, *Act.* 20. 30.) and thereby corrupt the Doctrine of the Goſpel? Was it not thus in many other Churches? And may it not be ſo at *Rome* too? yea moſt certainly we know it is ſo. For though we grant that Church to have remain'd for a conſiderable time pure and uncorrupted, yet for many ages by-paſt to this very day, there have been ſuch Doctrines and Practices currently received and eſtabliſhed in that Church as the Apoſtles never taught to them nor to any others. And with reſpect to theſe I ſay they deſerved not the Title of an Apoſtolical Church, meerly becauſe an Apoſtle at firſt planted it, and preſided over it. The Papiſts themſelves will not now allow this Title to any of the *Greek* Churches, which were planted by the Apoſtles, becauſe they look upon them as erroneous and ſchiſmatical; and certainly they themſelves have as little reaſon to challenge it as any of their neighbours, being at leaſt as groſly degenerated as any, though they may have more proſperity and greater numbers of People adhering to them. It is not then ſo much the ſitting in the ſame Chair, as teaching the ſame Doctrines with the Apoſtles, that makes a Biſhop to be a true Succeſſor of them. Wherefore thoſe Churches which were planted by holy Men after the Apoſtles were dead and gone, if they receive the ſame Doctrine, and retain the ſame worſhip and Sacraments which the Apoſtles did, theſe may moſt juſtly be accounted Apoſtolical Churches, ſound members of the One, Holy, Catholick, Apoſtolick Church of Chriſt.

L. *I think there is great reaſon ſo to account them: but it ſeems very unreaſonable that any one Church ſhould ſtile it ſelf the Apoſtolick Church, ſo as to exclude all others from that Title; eſpecially ſo unſound a Church as that of* Rome, *which is at this day ſo very unlike to what it was in the times of the Apoſtles.*

T. It is indeed every whit as unreasonable as to arrogate to themselves alone the name of Catholick, which we discoursed of before. Nay let us suppose that the Bishops of *Rome* to this very day followed the example of the Apostles, preached the same Doctrine, led the same good lives, and used the same holy worship and discipline, so that their Church indeed deserved to be own'd as Apostolical, yet what in reason could be infer'd from hence more than this, *viz.* that the people in their own Dioceſs should be subject to them, and that all other ſiſter Churches ought to give them due reſpect, and maintain ſuch communion with them as thoſe at a diſtance are capable of. But it does not in the leaſt follow that the Biſhop of *Rome* is Chriſts Vicar upon Earth, and their Church the only Catholick and Apoſtolick Church, ſo that none muſt have this title but thoſe who inſlave themſelves to the Pope.

L. *You have ſaid enough to convince me how very abſurd it is for the Church of* Rome *to ſtile her ſelf the Catholick Apoſtolick Church, as if there were no other Chriſtians in the World but Papiſts; yet pray tell me, may not the Church of* Rome *be reckoned a part of the Catholick Church?*

T. At the beſt it is but a ſmall part, as I have before told you, and alſo a very unſound part. Yea I will not doubt to add, that take the Church of *Rome* even in the largeſt ſenſe, as comprehending all thoſe that ſubmit to the Pope as Head of the whole Church under Chriſt, they may juſtly be reckoned a Schiſmatical party, dividing themſelves from the reſt of the Catholick Church, ſetting up a falſe Head and Governour, and appointing unlawful terms of communion. And though in this reſpect the Maſters and leaders of the faction are in the greateſt guilt, yet the people who are ſeduced are alſo more or leſs guilty, according to the capacity they are in of get-

ting

ting better information. But yet notwithſtanding this Schiſm they are in, and notwithſtanding the many errors and abuſes that are among them, whilſt they profeſs the Chriſtian Religion, and own their Baptiſm, they may be allow'd the name of Chriſtians, ſuch as belong to the viſible Church of Chriſt. And (how uncharitable ſoever they are to us) I hope there are many good Chriſtians amongſt them, who do heartily believe the Goſpel, and live in obedience to it according to their knowledg, and who on that account may be ſtiled true members of the Catholick Church, as all honeſt, true hearted Chriſtians are, notwithſtanding thoſe errors and faults they may be guilty of, which do not utterly violate their Baptiſmal Covenant, nor deſtroy that faith and holineſs by which we are united to Chriſt the Head, and ſo are living members of his body the Church. But ſtill, I ſay, this title belongs not to them as they are Papiſts embracing the peculiar tenents of their own Church, but as they are Chriſtians holding the eſſential Articles of the Chriſtian Faith, together with our own and all other Churches. For as to Popery, it is really a diſeaſe, a corruption of the Chriſtian Religion. Yet as a diſeaſed Man may have his vitals ſo ſound, that even the Plague or Leproſie may not kill him, ſo may there be ſome amongſt the Papiſts in whom the great and common truths of Religion may be ſo deeply implanted, and ſo faithfully retained and improved, that the diſeaſe of Popery may not prove mortal. Whilſt they hold the foundation, Jeſus Chriſt and his Goſpel, though the hay and ſtubble which they build upon it ſhall be burnt, yet may they through the mercy of God in Chriſt, be ſaved, *ſo as by fire*, that is, with great difficulty, 1 *Cor.* 3. 11, 12, *&c.* And their caſe ſeems moſt pitiable, who through the diſadvantage of their education, want due means of inſtruction; and

what allowances our gracious God will make on that and the like accounts is fittest for us to leave to his own infinite wisdom: Only let us be careful to regulate our own practices by the plain rule of Gods holy Word, which through his favour we so plentifully enjoy.

L. *What you say shall teach me more charity to those of them that are sincere, than they will allow to us. But I do still more and more perceive how little reason there is for my entring into communion with that Church, in which there is so great hazard of Salvation, even no more than for my venturing into a Pest-house full of infected persons, because it's possible some of them may have so much strength of Nature as to overcome that dangerous distemper.*

T. The case is much the same.

CHAP. V.

Of some particular points in difference betwixt us and the Church of Rome, *and first, of the Pope's Supremacy.*

L. *HAving now received so full satisfaction in this first great point concerning the true Catholick Church, what it is, and who are the members of it, and being upon good grounds firmly perswaded, that the Church of* England *is a very sound part of this Catholick Church, in whose communion therefore, by Gods grace, I hope to live and die: I would in the next place gladly hear you discourse of some of those particular points wherein chiefly the difference lyes betwixt us and the Church of* Rome. *For they alledg many plausible reasons, and sometimes quote Scripture for those opinions of theirs which we reject as Popery; and therefore I would gladly be furnish'd with solid and good answers to these their Allegations.*

T. Most readily shall I afford you my assistance herein. Only let me premise, that suppose in this or that particular opinion you should fancy their Church had the truth on her side, yea though it really was so,

yet

yet is this no sufficient reason why you should go over to their communion, since from what has been said you may discern that their Church has no manner of jurisdiction over ours, (which we shall presently make more plain) and you cannot lawfully desert your own Church meerly because you apprehend there is some error commonly received in it, whilst you have liberty to hold communion with it without owning and professing that error. And though for my own part I declare I do not know so much as any one material point of difference, wherein the Church of *Rome* has the truth on her side, yet this I speak with respect to those who in some particular cases, may be of another mind, and afterward may have occasion to make use of it accordingly. But now proceed to those several points wherein you desire satisfaction.

L. *I will so, and shall herein follow the method in which I find them laid down in this little Book, to which I have hitherto had recourse. And the first thing here mention'd is concerning one Pope in the Church,* viz. *the Bishop of* Rome, *who is (they say) to be own'd as the visible Head and Governor of the whole Church under Christ.*

T. This is indeed the most fundamental point of the *Romish* Faith, by which chiefly they stand distinguisht from all other Churches, and as such I have often upon occasion mention'd it already; and have told you that there is not a word of it in the Apostles Creed, which is the summ of the Christian Faith, nor yet in the Holy Scriptures whence that Creed was taken, which may be sufficient prejudice against it: but pray what do they alledg in proof of it?

L. *Both this my Author and others commonly plead, that as there is one Emperour in an Empire, one King in a Kingdom, one Master in a Family, so there should be one Pope in the Church.*

T. I think they should rather infer the quite contrary,

trary, that as there is a Master in every Family, a King in every Kingdom, *&c.* so in every Diocess there should be a Bishop, and in every Nation a Primate, (or chief Bishop,) or else a Synod of Bishops, from whom there should lie no appeal to any foreign Bishop whatsoever. It would indeed have look'd a little more like an argument for their purpose, if they could have said, that as there is one Emperor over all the Kings and Kingdoms of the World, so there ought to be one Pope over all Bishops and Churches. But as it appears impossible for one Man to govern the whole World, so neither is it much easier for one Bishop to govern all the Christians in the World, especially if all Nations should embrace Christianity, as every good Man desires they should. But to let pass their little similes and idle fancies, do you think, if it had been a matter of such necessity to salvation, as Papists say it is, to own the Pope as Christs Vicar, and visible Head of the Catholick Church; do you think, I say, that our Blessed Saviour and his Apostles would not have told us of it, and have given strict command to all Christians to obey him, and to seek to his Infallible judgment in all doubts and controversies, and submit to his authority for the composing of all differences? whereas we now find not one syllable to this purpose either in the Gospel or Epistles: but Christians are exhorted to obey their own Rulers both Sacred and Civil, and to take the Doctrine delivered by our Blessed Saviour and his Apostles as the Infallible Rule of their faith and manners; and no other Head of the Church do we read of but our Blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to whom *all power is given in Heaven and Earth*, as he himself tells us, *Matt.* 28. 18. But he no where tells us that he hath transfer'd all this power to any mortal Man, nor settled any person as his Vicar and Deputy-Governour of all the Christian World.

L. *Yes,*

L. *Yes, they say Christ gave this priviledg to Saint* Peter, *stiling him the Rock on which he would build his Church, and giving him the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven,* Matt. 16. 18, 19. *and from Saint* Peter *they would have this power to be derived to his Successors the Bishops of* Rome.

T. This is the Text which they commonly bring for their purpose, but with how little reason may appear at the very first sight, whilst neither is here confer'd upon St. *Peter* any such power as to be Ruler over all the Christian Church, nor the least mention made of any priviledge whatever to be convey'd from him to his Successors at *Rome*, or any other where. As to the *Rock* here spoken of, many of the Ancients understand by it the Doctrine which St. *Peter* had now profest, that great fundamental article of the Christian Faith, that *Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God.* But let us suppose it to be meant of his person, as he was to be a Preacher of this Doctrine, yet is this no more than what we find said of the rest of the Apostles, *Ephes.* 2. 20. where Christians are said to be *built on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Christ himself being the chief corner stone*, that is, plainly that these Christians were establisht in the belief of that Doctrine which had been more obscurely revealed by the Prophets, and of which the Apostles were the chief Preachers, being the founders of the Christian Church, having received their Authority from Jesus Christ, the Supreme Ruler and only Head of this his Church. To the same purpose you may see *Rev.* 21. 14. where the twelve Apostles are expresly called twelve foundations. So that as St. *Peter* made his confession in the name of the rest, in like manner what was said to him belongs to the rest also: which is most plain from *Joh.* 20. 23. where the power of the Keys is given to them all, that their just sentence delivered on Earth shall be ratified in Heaven; and the same doubtless

less belongs to all their Successors, the Bishops and Pastors of the Church, whilst they proceed according to the rules of the Gospel.

L. *If the former Text be not sufficient, they have another ready to produce for the same purpose,* viz. *Joh.* 21. 15, 16, 17. *where Saint* Peter *is commanded by our Blessed Saviour to* feed his lambs and sheep, *that is, they say, to rule over all Christians every where both small and great, high and low.*

T. They may say what they please, but the *Text* is very far from saying or intimating any such thing. With such corrupt glosses they may force any Text to serve their turn, as from those words of our Saviour to St. *Peter*, *Luk* 22. 32. *I have pray'd for thee that thy faith fail not*, (that he should not utterly fall away from Christ, notwithstanding his denial of him) hence they would collect that St. *Peter* had a promise of Infallibility, and this too must belong to the Pope in all ages as his Successor. But as to the Text you last named, would any honest impartial Reader ever imagin, that because St. *Peter* is so earnestly charged (as the rest of the Apostles in other places are) to be very diligent in Preaching the Gospel, in gathering and feeding the flock of Christ, that he is thereby made Ruler over the Christian World, and the Bishops of *Rome* after him invested in the same power and jurisdiction, whilst there is not a syllable said of any such power, nor any mention of Successors? Or if these had been concern'd, yet is there any intimation given that those at *Rome* should have this priviledg rather than the Bishops of *Antioch*, where they will grant St. *Peter* to have been Bishop long before he was at *Rome*.

L. *These things I confess will very hardly be drawn from that Text.*

T. So little countenance doth either that or any other Text give to their pretences, that it would seem more reasonable, and modest for them to wave all talk

talk of Scripture in this case, and depend barely upon Tradition with which they use to make much noise; and yet this if truly searched into will do them little service, as I may after shew. At present let it suffice to add, that these Texts they quote were not understood in that sense they put upon them, either by St. *Peter* himself, or the rest of the Apostles; no nor by the Christian Church for many hundred years after. Whatever precedency St. *Peter* might have by way of honour, yet do we no where find him claiming any power over his Brethren the Apostles; nor does he once mention any such matter in either of his Epistles, but stiles himself, as the rest did, a Servant and Apostle of Jesus Christ. And when he speaks to the Elders or Bishops of the Church, he does not command them as the Supreme Ruler of all Bishops, but with great meekness exhorts them as a brother, stiling himself an Elder, 1 *Pet.* 5. 1. and his exhortation to them is at the third *verse*, that *they should not carry themselves as Lords over Gods heritage*, (nor proudly affect any undue superiority over them) but make themselves *examples to the flock*, that so they might receive their reward from the Lord Jesus, whom he stiles the *chief Shepherd*, never adding that under Christ he himself was to be reckoned chief Shepherd here upon Earth. And if it should be lookt upon as only a piece of modesty in St. *Peter* (a vertue which his pretended Successors have had little share of) that he would say nothing of his own great power, let it be further considered, that as no such power was given him by our blessed Saviour, when there was a contention amongst the Apostles who should be greatest: so neither was it ever ascribed to him by any Apostle, either before Christs death or after it. There is no appearance of it in that assembly of the Apostles and Elders, *Act.* 15. 6. when St. *Paul* writes to the *Romans*,

mans, he says nothing of this great privileg belonging to that See. And when he writes to the *Corinthians* and reproves them for their factions and sidings, whilst some were for *Cephas*, others for *Apollos*, &c. (by which *Cepkas* it's plain must be meant St. *Peter*) yet he says not a word, on this so fair an occasion, to enjoyn their preferring *Cephas* before all others; but exhorts them to peace and quietness in their subjection to Christ and his Ministers, without being *puft up for one against another*; yea, writing to the *Galatians* he tells them that upon a just occasion he withstood Saint *Peter* to the face, saying nothing by way of *Salvo* to his supreme jurisdiction. To conclude, no where do we read in all the New Testament of any other Head of the whole Church but Jesus Christ himself as he is expresly stiled, *Col.* 1. 18. *Ephes.* 1. 22. and in many other places. Nor would I have named any, but that I remember I once met with an ignorant Papist, who quoting 1 *Cor.* 12. 21. *The head cannot say to the feet I have no need of you,* would thence prove that Christ could not be the Head of the Church, because he may say he has no need of us, as if because that place was not meant of him, no other was. But it's no great wonder to hear a Papist arguing so weakly out of Scripture, in which they are so little conversant.

L. *And no greater wonder is it that they have so little regard for that which does them so little service; and particularly I perceive they have no help from it, for the confirming this great article of the Popes Supremacy. But though the Holy Scripture does so little befriend their cause, yet I have often heard them brag much of Councils and Fathers, how these do all with one consent acknowledg and assert this his Supremacy: which though I am not able to disprove, yet I am very backward to take it on their bare word, because I find such ill dealing in their quotation of Scripture, and in other cases.*

T. Good

T. Good reason you have to be so wary, since the boast they make of antiquity being on their side, is notoriously vain and false, and in nothing more palpably than in the present case about the Popes Universal Supremacy. For in none of the ancient Councils is any such priviledge given him, any more than in holy Scripture: which Councils our Church most readily embraces, especially the four first. Yea the direct contrary is decreed in the very first and most famous General Council, that of *Nice*. For therein it was determined as to the Jurisdiction of Bishops, that ancient customs should be retain'd: and that such eminent Bishops as of *Alexandria* and *Antioch*, should have the same priviledges in their Precincts, that the Bishop of *Rome* had in his. By which decree, they within their several limits, were made as absolute as he, and were not in the least subject to his power, nor responsible to him for their proceedings. And not to trouble you with many instances, in the next age after this, there was a great Council in *Carthage*, where St. *Austin* himself was present, in which it was expresly decreed, that there should be no appeals to any foreign Bishop, after matters had been determined amongst themselves. This indeed gave offence to the Pope that then was, who pretended that this power of receiving appeals was granted him by the Council of *Nice*. To which the *African* Bishops answered, they had never heard any such matter, but would send purposely to *Nice* it self, or some other neighboring Bishops to make enquiry: they did so, and found all to be meer fraud and forgery. Such wicked arts did they of *Rome* use from the beginning, for the justifying and promoting their proud Usurpations. Something of a precedency, we grant, there was very anciently allow'd to the Bishop of *Rome*, which had nothing in it of jurisdiction and power over the rest of his brethren, but only

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was an honour granted him, chiefly on account of *Rome*'s being the Seat of the Emperour. Hereupon he had many advantages above other Bishops, and was capable of doing them good Offices at Court, and on that account frequent application was made to him, by such as needed his assistance; and very often in point of meer prudence matters were brought to him from other Churches, and referred to his arbitration. Hither also many of the Eastern Bishops were forced to fly for refuge and succour, when oppress by the *Arrians*. By these and such like means, especially by the Emperour's removal more and more into the East, the Bishops of *Rome* strangely encreased in honour and power, and at length in pride and insolence. So that in succeeding times, as a secular spirit of ambition and covetousness began to infect the greatest Churchmen, there were most vehement contests betwixt the Bishops of *Rome* and of *Constantinople* for the preheminence. For in one General Council it had been determined, that because the Emperour had his residence at *Constantinople*, the Bishop of that City should have the same priviledges which the Bishop of *Rome* had formerly enjoy'd for the same reason. And one of the Bishops of *Constantinople* at length took upon him to stile himself Universal Bishop; thereby (say learned Men) claiming rather honour than any jurisdiction over his brethren. Yet *Gregory* then Bishop of *Rome* was so incensed at it, that he positively declared that whoever should assume such a proud title was a certain forerunner of Antichrist. This was about six hundred years after our Saviour. And not long after it, *Boniface* the third, Bishop of *Rome*, by means of the wicked *Phocas*, who had murdered his Master *Mauricius*, and was chosen Emperour in his stead, got his Church to be stiled the Supreme of all other Churches, though with much ado,

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as their own Historian expresses it. But this Supremacy the body of the *Greek* Church utterly refused to acknowledge, and so does to this day, though they of *Rome* have several times used all manner of arts and tricks to draw them into a compliance; still persisting in the same methods of fraud and violence for the confirming and securing their arrogant usurpations, which at first they made use of to introduce them.

L. *But they say it's necessary to the unity of the Church that there should be one Supreme Head and Governour.*

T. Very true, and so I have told you there is, namely the Lord Jesus Christ the only Head of the Catholick Church, the unity whereof consists in the subjection of the members to this same Head, by their belief of the same Doctrine, and obedience to the same holy Laws, and by living in mutual love and charity, and Christian communion one with another. And herein most plainly doth the Apostle place the unity of the Christian Church *(Ephes. 4.)* that they have one Lord, one Faith, *&c.* but not in their having one chief Ruler, under Christ here on Earth, whether Pope or Council; only they are bound to live in obedience to their own Princes and Bishops in the respective Dominions and Churches where they reside.

L. *They say that Christ alone is the invisible Head, but the Pope is the visible Head of the Church.*

T. This is a distinction we no where meet with in holy Scripture, and therefore do justly reject it as the fond imagination of their own Brain, coin'd only to serve a turn. But instead of detaining you with any further discourse on this Subject, I shall refer you to the learned Dr. *Barrow*'s excellent Treatise, which handles it at large, if you have leisure to peruse it, wherein this pretence of the Popes's Supremacy is so shamefully exposed and so fully confuted, as cannot but give abundant satisfaction to any intelligent & impartial Reader.

And

And this is done with such strength of reason, and such full proof from all antiquity, that I am apt to think there will scarce be found any of the Champions for the *Romish* cause (as bold Men as they be) so hardy and impudent as to attempt the returning any answer to that his most solid and impregnable Discourse.

L. *Yet it's a wonder if they do not: for they seem most zealous in contending for this above all other Doctrines.*

T. And will you blame them? since if this be disown'd, the whole fabrick of Popery falls to the ground. For if the Pope be not Head of the Church, then all Princes in their own Dominions will be found to be Supreme Moderators and Governours in all causes, and over all persons, as well Ecclesiastical as Civil: (which is our meaning when we stile the King Head of our Church) and then what reformation they with their Clergy have made, according to the Holy Scriptures, will appear justifiable. Yea, then these Princes may confer all manner of Church-preferments in their own Kingdoms, without asking the Popes leave, or expecting his confirmation: and all Ecclesiastical causes may be determined without any appeals to *Rome*. And if the King of *England* may do this in his Dominions (as most certainly he may) then may the King of *France* do the same in his (as if the Pope should provoke him, probably he might) and so may all others if they please. By which means at length the Bishop of *Rome* would be confined to his own Dioceſs; and his Spiritual power he shut up in much the same limits with his Temporal. But alas! what an utter ruin would this be to the Papal dignity and honour? How would their treasures be drain'd, their glory sullied, and their power abated, yea even reduced to nothing? No wonder therefore, if *Bellarmine*, in the Preface to his Books of the *Romish* Bishop, stiles this Doctrine of his Supremacy, the very summ

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or chief point of Christianity: Had he said of Popery, it had been true enough. For 'tis plain they look upon this as one of the most weighty articles of their faith. Let this be denied, our conformity to their Church in all other things will signifie little or nothing. As it appears in *Henry* the Eighths case; for though he still retain'd the main Body of Popery, yet because he rejected this power of the Pope, he was reckoned and treated as an Heretick and Apostate. Whereas let this be but own'd, and you shall be dispensed with in many other things. As our Historians tell us it was offered to Queen *Elizabeth* that we should have our Service in *English*, Communion in both kinds, *&c.* provided she would submit to the Popes authority, and own his Supremacy.

L. *This is, I perceive, so useful an opinion, that they have great reason to be zealous in asserting it; but it doth so apparently serve their own ends, that were it for nothing else, I should mightily suspect the truth of it, but, by the very slender proof they bring either from Scripture or Reason, I am sufficiently assured that it is notoriously false.*

T. Good ground you have so to be; yet I pray consider what mighty stress they lay upon this idle opinion, whilst they confine the Catholick Church to those who embrace it, and excommunicate all others as Hereticks and Schismaticks. Yea, such homage they pay to this their great Master, that even in things of an indifferent nature, they will rather yield obedience to his commands than to those of their own Prince. And that's plain from this instance amongst others, that for a considerable time in Queen *Elizabeth's* days, the Papists came to our Churches, but after the Pope had sent order to the contrary, they generally desisted. And I have heard some eminent Papists alledging the Popes Prohibition as the chief reason of their not taking the Oath of Allegiance. So certainly

true it is, that a Papist acting according to the rules of his own Church, can be no further a good Subject than the Pope will give him leave. Nor has any Doctrine been more destructive of the rights of Princes, and the duty of Subjects, than this of the Popes Supremacy. In pursuance of this, or for the promoting it, has the peace of the World in these latter ages been greatly disturbed, Kings and Kingdoms Excommunicated, and endeavoured to be destroy'd. Yea, for the disowning of this, according to their mercyless tenents, must we poor Protestants be made utterly miserable both in this life, and that to come. Here we must be condemned to fire and faggot, and hereafter to everlasting burnings, even because we will not believe the Bishop of *Rome* to be Christs Vicar on Earth.

L. *For the sake of this I am more apt to suspect the rest of their Popish Doctrines. But though the Pope be not Christs Vicar, yet is it not too severe to stile him Antichrist? for so it seems many of our Writers do, at which my Author is very angry, and says it is a calumny and a lye, and most intolerable stupidity to assert it.*

T. Certainly not greater than to assert his Supremacy: But pray what reason does he give for this his anger and his confidence?

L. *He says that Antichrist shall be a Jew, a particular Man, at the end of the World, whereas the Popes be successively many, of divers Nations, and many ages ago.*

T. Whilst he gives you only his bare word for all this, there would need no more confutation than a bare denial. Nor shall I give you or my self the trouble to search into the *Revelation*, or any other obscure places of Scripture, thence to prove the Pope to be Antichrist. Only you may call to mind the saying of Pope *Gregory*, even now quoted, That he who should take on him the title of Universal Bishop, is the forerunner of Antichrist. And so far as Pope *Gregory's*

Infallibility

Infallibility may be allow'd, they may serve to prove his Successors to be an Antichristian generation of men. But without going about positively to define what is meant by Antichrist in the New Testament, that which I would chiefly recommend to your serious consideration in this matter is this, That though the Bishops of *Rome* were at first very pious and good Men, and so generally continued for some ages, yet as they grew in wealth, they did by degrees strangely degenerate from the virtue and piety of their Predecessors, till at length they with the Grandees of the Clergy, who are the Governing party of the Popish faction, have most apparently set up and pursued a design exactly contrary to that of our blessed Saviour, which design of theirs may therefore well enough be stiled Antichristian, and so may the abettors of it; who have by the most vile and unchristian methods carried on the same.

To make this manifest in a few words, consider that our blessed Saviour hath expressly told us that his Kingdom is not of this World, does not consist in riches, honours, and Worldly dignity; but his whole business was to promote the glory of God, and the salvation of Mens Souls, by bringing us to the love and practice of piety and humility, righteousness and mercy, purity and sobriety, and all true vertue and goodness. But now on the contrary, he who stiles himself Christs Vicar, plainly enough declares that his Kingdom is of this World. For what is it they seek after, and so earnestly contend for but worldly greatness and power, pomp and glory; to make all Men pay homage and obedience to them? And under this pretence of being Vicar of Christ and Successor of St. *Peter*, have the Popes for many ages exalted themselves above all that is called God, I mean above all Civil power, above Kings and Emperours, who are indeed Gods Vicegerents on Earth. They have set

their feet on the necks of Princes, and kickt off their Crowns at their pleasure; deposed and destroy'd Kings, absolved their Subjects from the Allegiance due to them, and disposed of their Kingdoms to others so far as they had power. For their own secular interests they have often stir'd up Wars amongst Christian Princes, yea themselves have maintain'd and prosecuted the same. They have excited the people to Civil Wars and Seditions, and sometimes even drawn the Son to rebel against his own Father. They have set up where they could a most cruel and bloody Inquisition for the destroying of those whom they call Hereticks, even all that will not submit to their tyranny. By slaughters in the open field, and publick Massacres; by burning at the Stake, or murdering in Prison, have they cut off thousands if not millions of innocent and good Christians. Judge then whether are these Men acted by the Spirit of Christ, yea or no?

L. *I think not, since he tells us that he came into the World to save Mens Lives, and not to destroy them.*

T. To this let me add that whilst they keep up the name of Christianity (and so may be said to sit in the Temple of God) they have for their own ends most grossly corrupted this holy Religion, ordering all their Doctrines and Practices so as may conduce most (not to the good of Souls, but) to encrease the wealth and honour of the Pope and his Clergy. Multitudes of whom, especially those of higher rank, have lived in pomp and pride, yea wallowed in all riot and luxury; and by the bad examples they give, by the loose Doctrines they teach, and the large Indulgences they grant upon easie terms, they have done much to promote and encourage wickedness among the people. Judge then, I say, whether is all this pride and ambition, this sensuality and impurity, this bloodiness and cruelty, falshood and violence, which is the very natural genius

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and ſpirit of Popery (properly ſo called) whether is it agreeable to the temper and deſign of Chriſtianity?

L. I rather think it directly contrary thereto.

T. So far therefore it may juſtly be ſtiled Antichriſtian. Yet herein do not miſtake me, as if I was ſo uncharitable as to cenſure all Papiſts to be ſuch proud, cruel, vicious perſons. No, far be it from me, I hope there are many honeſt ſouls among them, both of Clergy and Laity, who, (as I have before ſaid) do according to their knowledge ſerve God in the ſimplicity of their hearts. But this I aſſert, that conſider Popery as a thing diſtinct from Chriſtianity, (the chief Doctrine of it being that of the Pope's Supremacy) it hath been and at this day is carried on by ſuch ways as I have named, even by force and fraud, by plots and treaſons, by war and bloudſhed. And the governing part among them who are chief factors for this deſign, the Court and Conclave of *Rome*, with all their buſie active inſtruments up and down the World, are led and acted by ſuch an Antichriſtian or Unchriſtian ſpirit, as I have before deſcribed. Moſt plainly do they prefer their own cauſe and party far above Chriſtianity; the greatneſs and glory of the Pope and his Clergy before the honour and intereſt of our bleſſed Saviour, and the ſalvation of precious Souls. Inſomuch that with theſe Grandees Religion is little more than a bare name, and ſerves meerly for a cloak and pretence, under the diſguiſe whereof they can more effectually purſue their own carnal ends. And for the obtaining of theſe they have ſo ſtrangely altered it, that by the uſe they make of it, and the colours they give it, a man would be apt to think that the great deſign of our Saviour's coming into the World was not ſo much to redeem and ſave mankind, as to advance his pretended Vicar the Pope, and to make him the greateſt and moſt abſolute Monarch in the whole World. Whereas in

truth nothing can be more contrary to the life and temper of our Saviour, and to the whole tenour of his Holy Religion, than such an ambitious, lordly Spirit, proudly affecting dominion and honour, and the great things of this present World. On this account then you may perceive, how justly the Pope and his adherents, who make it their chief business to promote this his Temporal greatness, to the infinite prejudice of Christs true Religion, may justly be stiled an Antichristian faction. And if after all this it shall be found that there are Prophecies in the *Revelation* and other places of Scripture, which foretel that such a great Apostasie there shall be from the purity and simplicity of Religion, and that both as to time and place, and many other circumstances agreeing to the Church of *Rome* (as by many of our Learned Writers with great reason is asserted) this will go very far toward a demonstration, that the Pope with his Faction, is indeed the Antichrist foretold in holy Scripture.

L. *However that be, it seems most evident that Popery is a Doctrine very different from true Christianity, and in many things less directly contrary to it, and is carried on by courses contrary to the Example & precepts of our Blessed Saviour.*

T. And by this means I hope you do still more and more perceive that a man may be a sincere good Christian without embracing of Popery, & particularly this foundation-article of the Popes Supremacy. On which having been so long, let us proceed to somewhat else.

CHAP. VI.

Of Purgatory and Prayers for the Dead, and Indulgences.

L. *THE next points which my Author mentions are Purgatory and Prayers for the Dead, which he puts both together.*

T. Not without cause, for the latter depends on the

the former, as they have now ordered their Prayers, though neither of them upon holy Scripture, as I doubt not but to manifest; but tell me first what says he of Purgatory?

L. *He says that the Apostle informs us* (*in* 1 Cor. 3.) *that there is a fire in the other World, in which some slight faults of good people must be purged away before they can attain Heaven.*

T. But if you read the place you'l find no such matter. There's not a word said of fire in another World; or that mens faults are done away by fire. Only the Apostle is there speaking of those who add their own fancies and false Doctrines to the Truths of Christianity, which Doctrines of theirs shall in due time be strictly examined, and upon a narrow search shall be discovered and rejected even as the fire consumes hay and stubble. And if the Men that preached these Doctrines shall be found to hold the foundation, so as to be preserved from destruction, yet will they escape with great difficulty, as a Man that's saved out of the fire. And indeed this text doth most aptly represent to us the condition of the *Romish* Church; for whilst they retain the foundation of Christian Religion, they do build thereupon hay and stubble, many false and corrupt Doctrines, as an excellent Writer of our Church in a Sermon upon this Text, gives a full account in a little room. And amongst others he reckons this of Purgatory, of which, with a pleasant sharpness, he there says, that though they have got to themselves Gold and Silver by this Doctrine (and that of Indulgences which depends upon it) yet is it as errant hay and stubble as the rest, that is, vain and false For neither this nor any other Text speaks a word concerning Souls being held in Purgatory flames, and that they may be eased there, or released thence, by the Masses that are said for them, or by the alms that were either left by themselves, or are given by their friends on their behalf.

L. *But he attempts to prove both a Purgatory and praying for the Dead from* 2 Mac. 12. *where it's said to be an holy and healthful cogitation to pray for the Dead that they may be freed from their sins, that is, says he, from venial sins, for of mortal no pardon can hereafter be obtain'd.*

T. I o let pass his distinction of venial and mortal sins, is he not, think you, reduced to miserable straits, when he is forced to run to the *Apocrypha* for a Text, to a Book which was never own'd for Canonical by the *Jewish* Church, or nor by the Christian Church in St. *Jerome*'s time, which was about four hundred years after our Saviour? Neither yet will this text serve their turn; for if you look into the place, you will find, that when *Judas* went to bury those that were slain, he found under their coats things consecrated to Idols; whereupon both he and the rest that were with him, betook themselves to earnest prayer for the pardon of this great sin; which prayer might respect the living rather than the dead, that God would not punish the rest of the People for this their crime. And for the very same reason might he send money to *Jerusalem*, to offer a sin-offering, as is after related. And though another gloss is put upon it in the History, as if all this were done for the dead, yet may this be the Historians own opinion, or perhaps rather his that abridged the History: for *Chap.* 2. 23. he tells you that he abridged five Books of *Jason*, and at the end begs pardon for what he may have done amiss, which is not like the stile of an inspired Writer. But what if *Judas*'s design was indeed such as the Historian relates? Is his example a sufficient warrant for us, when we have no rule for it in the Word of God; Nay nor yet after all, will this Text justifie their Doctrine of Purgatory, since here's nothing said of any pains they were in at present, only he might hope to procure mercy for them at the Resurrection.

L. *But*

L. *But pray was not this ſin of Idolatry a mortal one, for which, according to their own Doctrine, ſinners go to Hell and not to Purgatory? therefore by their principles this practice of* Judas *cannot be allow'd.*

T. Very true: but for this *Bellarmine* has a ſhift at hand, that *Judas* in charity hoped they might repent juſt when they were at the point of death, and therefore in that hope offered thoſe Sacrifices. But I wonder how he came to know *Judas*'s thoughts ſo well; and 'tis hard to imagine what time they ſhould have for repentance, who were ſlain in the battel. Has your Author no better proof out of Scripture for his opinion than this comes to?

L. *He names no more Texts but theſe.*

T. And truly he might as well have named none at all. Others do inſiſt on ſome other places, but to as little purpoſe, which I ſhall not now take notice of, ſince I ſuppoſe he took theſe for the ſtrongeſt, and you ſee what little ſtrength there is in them.

L. *I hear them ſpeak much of the Cuſtom of the ancients in praying for the dead.*

T. But herein they are guilty of great ſophiſtry and foul dealing: for the prayers anciently uſed were nothing like thoſe that are now in the *Romiſh* Church, nor do they in the leaſt prove the ancient Chriſtians belief of a Purgatory. For they in their prayers made a commemoration of the moſt eminently pious and holy perſons, even of Prophets, Apoſtles and Martyrs, as an honour to their memory, bleſſing and praiſing God for them, in ſome ſorts as we do in our Church, at the end of the Prayer for the Church militant; where we bleſs God *for all his Saints and ſervants departed this life in his faith and fear, &c.* Beſides this they prayed for their joyful Reſurrection, & the conſummation of their happineſs: which was in effect no more than to pray for the coming of Chriſt, when all believers ſhall be advanced to the

height of glory. And not unlike this is an expression in our Liturgy, in the Office for Burial, where we pray, *That God would accomplish the number of his Elect, and hasten his kingdom, that we with all those who are departed in the true faith of his holy name, may have our perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and Soul, in his eternal glory.* And yet it's well known how far our Church is from acknowledging a Purgatory; neither therefore, from any such expressions used in their prayers, can it rationally be concluded that the Church anciently own'd this opinion. Of this you may find a full account in A. B. *Usher's* answer to the Jesuits Challenge. But if among some of the Ancients there may be found expressions that go somewhat farther than what I have named, yet for many ages there was nothing like to the present practice of the Church of *Rome*. Neither doth it beseem us in such cases to be governed by any other authority than what is Divine. Now we certainly know there is not one place of Scripture, either in the Old Testament or the New, where we have any command given us to offer up prayers for the dead; nor any promise made, that if we do so, it shall any thing avail or help them. Our Lord has taught us nothing of this in his most comprehensive form: Nor do we find one example of it recorded in all the Bible. How dare we then in so weighty a matter make such addresses to God, when we have no manner of encouragement or allowance so to do? wherefore for this very reason amongst others a Man cannot lawfully joyn with the *Romish* Church in her prayers.

L. *Since there is nothing from Scripture, or the best antiquity to justifie this practice, what is it that Papists most rely upon in this case?*

T. Even upon pretended revelations, and a company of ridiculous Monkish stories, of Souls appearing after their decease, begging help from their friends that they might be delivered out of the pains

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of Purgatory. But whatever tales they tell in their fabulous Legends, we that read the Holy Scriptures, can find nothing there of any such place or pains: *The wicked go into everlasting punishment, and the righteous into life eternal*, but not a word said of a Purgatory for either of these, or of a middle state for some middle sort of Men that are neither to be ranked amongst the wicked nor the righteous.

L. *But is there not a middle state for Souls commonly acknowledged by Protestant Divines?*

T. This much I think they generally acknowledg, that the Souls of good Men being separate from the body, are not suddenly advanced to the utmost height of happiness, nor will be till the Resurrection and great Judgment-day: neither it's probable, are the wicked till then thrown into the forest punishment: And so far the condition of both may be said to be a middle state betwixt what it is now on earth, and what it will be after the day of Judgment. But in this state we know of nothing to be done either by the persons themselves, or by any on earth, for them, to mend their condition. The Souls of the righteous are in the hand of the Lord, in rest and peace, chearfully expecting the perfection of their glory and joy: and the condition of the wicked may seem most like that of the fain Angels (as it's described *Jude* v. 6.) in everlasting chains of darkness, reserved to the Judgment of the great day. And betwixt these already is the great gulf fixt, that there is no passing from one to the other, to find or give relief. Much less can the prayers or alms of surviving friends afford any refreshment to miserable Souls. And some there are even of the Church of *Rome* so modest and ingenuous, that they have discourst much at this rate concerning the middle state of Souls departed; and have expresst their opinion, that it was not so much the prayers said for

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the dead that gave them relief, as the charitable temper they died in when they left money for pious uses. But for the freedom such Writers have taken, both they and their Writings have been severely censured and condemned at *Rome*.

L. *What makes them so zealous in the case?*

T. You need not go far for a reason, when you consider how much gain is hereby brought in to the Crafts masters; what vast summs of money are given to the Church by dying Men, frightned with the dreadful Stories of Purgatory. What will they not then give for a speedy deliverance thence? And this they are taught not to hope for without good store of Masses, for which the Priests that say them expect to be well paid. So that there is a great deal of truth in that common blunt saying, that Purgatory-fire keeps the Popes Kitchin warm. No wonder then if they are so angry with those that go about to quench it. This Doctrine moreover it is that chiefly keeps up the market for Indulgences, which, whatever they do now, were heretofore wont to bring in vast treasures to the Popes Coffers, by several arts which he used in putting them off.

L. *On what pretence do they give out these Indulgences?*

T. Sell them you should rather have said: for so they have used to do, and did it at such a shameful rate in *Germany*, as gave the first occasion for the Reformation there. But to answer your question, their pretence is, that there is a vast treasure of merits in the Church, and that not only of Christ's but of the Saints too, who have done and suffered much more than was necessary for themselves, so that they can spare somewhat for others. And this treasure you must know is in the Popes keeping, who can by the fulness of his power, dispense it as he pleases, and apply it to particular persons, in what measure and upon what terms he thinks fit. And the benefit of these is said to be the freeing

freeing them from temporary puniſhments due for faults already pardoned, and this freedom they are to enjoy, not only upon Earth in being eaſed of long penances, but alſo in Purgatory, from whence they ſhall ſooner be delivered by vertue of theſe Indulgences.

L. *I do not well underſtand how there is a puniſhment ſtill due after the faults pardoned.*

T. Nor any body elſe I think: for a fault is then ſaid to be pardoned when the puniſhment is remitted. Indeed God may ſo far pardon a Penitent as not to puniſh him with eternal miſery, and yet he may inflict bodily puniſhments in this life; as a malefactor may have a pardon for his life, and yet may be burnt in the hand or the like: but ſo far as a Man is puniſhed, ſo far he was not pardoned.

L. *Do not theſe Indulgences then free Men from bodily puniſhments which otherwiſe they muſt undergo?*

T. That indeed would be ſomewhat if they could free Men from Gout and Stone, and all ſuch diſeaſes as do either naturally flow from their vices, or are inflicted by God as puniſhments for them: then, I ſay, a Man would not grudg to purchaſe Indulgences at a dear rate: for beſides his eaſe and health, it might ſave all the mony ſpent upon Phyſicians. But this alas! the great Champions for Indulgences dare not pretend to, and full eaſily they might be confuted if they did. Wherefore *Bellarmine* confeſſes they do not free Men from natural evil, diſeaſes, or the like, which are the fruits of ſin; nor yet from ſuch fines and penalties as may in Courts be inflicted for their offences. What then is left beſides the imaginary pains of Purgatory? But by the little force their Indulgences have in this World, a Man has cauſe to ſuſpect they will be no more effectual in the other. But the beſt on't is, no body comes thence to tell tales how they are cheated, and ſo the trade goes on ſmoothly. And

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were it mony only that the poor people are cheated of by these vile arts, the matter were not much: but alas! we have great cause to fear that many are hereby deluded to the loss of their immortal Souls, of more value than the whole World; instead of a temporary Purgatory, from which they hoped to be secured at easier rates than a timely repentance and thorough reformation, how many fall into that eternal misery which is threatned to the wicked and impenitent, from whence no mony nor Masses, no prayers nor tears can ever release them?

L. *Yet they say we Protestants are strangely unkind to our friends departed, that we will not so much as put up a prayer to God for them, but seem quite to neglect and forget them.*

T. They have little reason to accuse us for this, since of all the instances of charity any where recommended in Scripture, we never find this mentioned, that we should pray for our friends after they are dead. Why then should we pretend to such a piece of charity as neither God hath commanded, nor any the most holy charitable persons of old ever practised? If it were fit for us to give way to our own fancies, why might it not look like a piece of charity to pray for those in Hell, that their pains may be mitigated or shortned? But have we any warrant from God so to do? Or dare Papists themselves presume to do it? Such as these we look on out of the reach of prayers. And for those in Heaven, they surely are past the need of them, farther than what was before mentioned, that whilst we pray for the coming of Christ, we therein comprehend the consummation of their felicity. How little reason then have we to pray for our friends departed? The greatest kindness that I know we can shew them, is to preserve a grateful remembrance of their piety and virtue, to imitate their good examples, obey their counsels, and please our selves with the

forethoughts

forethoughts of that happy time when we ſhall follow them into glory. Moreover ſince we believe that our prayers cannot profit our friends when they are dead, this may well make us more induſtrious to do them all the good we can whilſt they are alive. And if by Gods bleſſing on our endeavours, they become truly pious and good in *this* World, we ſhall have no need to pray for them when they are gone into the *other*; but rather will they have cauſe to praiſe God for us.

By this time I hope you perceive how little cauſe there is of ſeparation from our Church, on account of our not uſing prayers for the deliverance of ſouls out of Purgatory. Since we have no reaſon to believe there is any ſuch place, nor conſequently to uſe any ſuch prayers. But yet I will add, if any Man ſhould be of another opinion, and fancy this to be a lawful piece of charity, yet would not this juſtifie his ſeparation from us: for though he thought our publick prayers in this to be defective, yet I hope this defect does not render the reſt unlawful. If he meet not with a prayer agreeable to his own private conceit in this matter, yet he may joyn very chearfully in thoſe we do uſe, which are moſt plainly agreeable to the will of God revealed in his word, which holy word ought to be the rule both of our belief and worſhip. And when we vary from this rule, we cannot pray in faith, with any well grounded confidence of being heard: as particularly they cannot, who pray for the releaſe of Souls from Purgatory, or for the eaſing of their pains there, ſeeing they have neither precept nor promiſe, no nor ſo much as any example in all Scripture to warrant their ſo doing.

L. *I am convinced they have not: nor will I by the grace of God ever offer up any ſuch unwarrantable prayers.*

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.
Of Transubstantiation.

T. WHAT is the next Popish Doctrine your Author mentions?

L. That of Christs Personal Presence in the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, about which I shall be glad to hear you discourse, and to answer the Arguments he brings for it.

T. Now then we come to their great Doctrine of Transubstantiation, *viz.* that the natural substance of the Bread and Wine in the Communion, is by Consecration changed into the substance of Christs body and blood, which is certainly one of the most absurd and unreasonable Doctrines that ever was taught, and yet there is nothing they assert with more zeal and fierceness: and in Queen *Maries* days accounted it reason enough to burn poor Protestants for Hereticks if they would not profess it. This being commonly one of the first questions put to them, What say you to the Sacrament of the Altar? For so they used to stile the Eucharist or Holy Communion. Well, pray let me hear what arguments your Author brings for this strange opinion.

L. He first attempts to prove it from those words of our Saviour at the institution of his Holy Sacrament, This is my body which is given for you, *Luk.* 22. 19. *and he adds, that Christ now making his Will, his words must needs be very clear.*

T. This indeed is the Text they commonly insist on, and the words in themselves are clear enough: but the strange comment they make on them does certainly render them the most obscure and unintelligible that ever were uttered. For pray tell me, does it not seem a wonder of wonders, past all understanding, that our Blessed Saviour, who was there alive in the midst of his Disciples, should at the same time himself give them

his

his natural body and blood to be eaten and drunk by them, and after this still remain alive sound, and whole, as he was before without any manner of change?

L. *It seems very strange and unlikely, I confess, at first hearing.*

T. And yet we never find the Apostles making any objection, or raising any scruple about it: Nor does our Blessed Saviour say any thing to prevent or remove such objections as might easily be made. May we not then fairly infer hence, that they understood these words in the same plain, easie sense, which such expressions in like cases do very evidently carry along with them, namely that the Bread and Wine were the Symbols and Sacramental signs and tokens of his Body and Blood: and the breaking of the one, and pouring out of the other, did very fitly represent the wounding and bruising of his Body, and the shedding of his Blood for our sake. Neither do we say, as they accuse us, that these are bare figures of Christs body and Blood, but do constantly teach that the benefits of his Death and Passion are hereby effectually communicated to worthy receivers. Here we make a solemn and most thankful commemoration of the Sacrifice which Christ offered on the Cross, and in feeding on the holy Elements we feast upon that Sacrifice, and so renew and confirm our Covenant with God in Christ, giving up our selves to him as an holy and obedient people; and by these Seals of his Covenant the great God assures us of the truth of his Promises, and gives himself to us as our God and reconciled Father in Jesus Christ. And by this means our faith is strengthned, our love to God and man is quickned and inflamed, and all other graces increased, and the Divine comforts of his Spirit afforded: and so *the flesh of Christ becomes meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed*, nourishing our Souls to eternal life.

L. *All this is plain and easie to understand.*

T. It is so, and most natural it is after this manner to explain our Saviours words, as being most agreeable to the common way of speaking in like cases, where that which is a sign or Sacrament is said to be the very thing which it denotes and represents. Thus the Paschal Lamb is said to be the Lords Passover, of which it was a commemoration, *Exod.* 12. 11. So in *Pharaoh*'s Dream the ears of corn and the kine are said to be years of plenty and of famine, because they signified the same. And a plain place to this purpose you have, 1 *Cor.* 10. 4. where it's said *that Rock was Christ*, because it did prefigure or typifie him. So when our Saviour says, *This Cup is the New Testament in my blood*, what other sense can these words have, but that this Wine represents his Blood, which was shed to ratifie and confirm the New Testament or Covenant of Grace and mercy, which God hath made with all true believers through his Son?

L. *He quotes also* Joh. 6. *where much is said concerning our eating Christ's flesh, and drinking his blood. But from what you have already said, I cannot but think it most reasonable to understand the words in a spiritual sence, as signifying our feeding upon Christ by faith, and so deriving grace from him into our Souls.*

T. You have good reason so to understand it, especially if you consider, that though this Discourse in the sixth of St. *John* may in a secondary sence be applied to this holy Sacrament, yet it seems most probable that our Saviour in this Chapter is chiefly speaking of his Doctrines, especially that great one of his dying for the sins of the World, and of his precepts and promises, these are to be believed and embraced, duly improved, and thoroughly digested into our Souls for their spiritual nourishment, as common food is received for the support of the body. For when the

People

People followed him chiefly for the loaves (as he tells them *ver.* 26.) he thence took occasion to exhort them, *not so much to labour for the meat which perisheth, as for that which endures to everlasting life.* As in *Joh.* 4. from the womans coming to draw water, he enters upon a discourse of that living water which he will give to all that believe on him. Now who is so dull as not to take spiritually, as being meant of the graces and comforts of the Spirit? And why should we not so understand this sixth Chapter, where he represents himself and Doctrine under the notion of bread? To omit many other reasons that might be alledged for it, our Saviour himself in my apprehension, does plainly tell us that we ought so to understand him, *v.* 63. for when the *Capernaites* mistook his meaning, and seemed to take his words in some such grosse and carnal sense as Papists at this day put upon them, he tells them that *the flesh profiteth nothing, that the Spirit gives life, and his words are Spirit and life*, such as that by our embracing of them there is a spiritual and divine life convey'd to our souls, quickning and renewing them, and so disposing them for life eternal.

L. But says my Author, his flesh did profit much in that he gave it for the redemption of the World.

T. Most true it did so: but our eating of his flesh, the very natural substance of it, supposing it could be done, would profit us nothing. What goes into the mouth can no more sanctifie the heart than it can defile it. But it is by our believing in a Crucified Saviour, by our loving and serving him, and conforming our selves to his likeness that we attain eternal life. Whilst his words remain in us and have power over us for the forming and governing of our hearts and lives, this while Christ dwells in us and we in him. And whilst the graces of his Spirit are communicated to us by his Word and Sacraments, we are truly fed and nourished by him in a spiritual manner.

L. *To this purpose my Author himself sometimes seems to speak: for he says the manner of Christ's real presence in the Sacrament is not gross, sensual and carnal, like that of other flesh which is daily eaten, but as the Church holds and believes it, Mystical and Sacramental.*

T. How wisely then had their Church done to have been content with saying it to be thus Mystical and Sacramental, without presuming positively to define after what manner the Body and blood of Christ are here present, as most unreasonably they have done, and have murdered thousands for not assenting to these their bold determinations. And thus your Author plainly contradicts himself: for he asserts that the Sacramental Bread and Wine are changed into the Body and Blood of Christ, by the mighty power of God, as the water was turned into wine, *Joh.* 2. and that certainly was true, plain Wine, in which there was nothing mystical or obscure. And according to this their Doctrine, must the eating of Christs Body be understood in a carnal sense: why else does he say soon after, that if Christ should be seen, they should have an horrour to eat him? So that eat him it seems they do, and that in such a manner as they should have an horrour to do if they could see him.

L. *And so one would think they should have at the very thought of it, though they see him not.*

T. But in the mean time does it not seem strange that the Natural Body and Blood of Christ should be there, and yet neither of them seen nor any way perceived?

L. *Yes truly very strange: but they say this is no more than what we find* Luk. 4. 30. *where Christ made himself invisible, and so past through the midst of his enemies without being seen of them.*

T. It's only said there, that he past through the midst of them, and so he might do by conveying himself swiftly away. Or suppose he made himself invi-

visible

ſible for a while, this we may eaſily enough apprehend that it might be done, by hindering the clearneſs of their ſight, or by other ways. But now for thouſands of people in all ages and places, having their ſenſes ſound, and the objects at a due diſtance, to be ſo ſtrangely deceived is a thing utterly incredible. Nor do we read a ſyllable in that or any other place, that our Saviour preſented to the people ſome object which had the appearance of quite another thing, and yet was really himſelf and not that other thing which it appeared to be. For thus they teach it is in the preſent caſe. Here is the moſt plain appearance of Bread and Wine, and yet no ſuch ſubſtance; but the ſubſtance of Chriſts Body and Blood whilſt there's no appearance of them. Chriſt is before them, and yet they cannot ſee him, they take him into their hands, and yet cannot feel him. Nay their ſight, their feeling, their ſmell and taſte do all perceive Bread and Wine, and nothing elſe, and yet do they confidently affirm that no Bread or Wine is there, but the very ſubſtance of Chriſt's Fleſh and Blood, though they diſcern no ſuch thing.

L. *This is all wonderful indeed, but they ſay this change is wrought by the mighty power of God in a miraculous manner as he made the World of nothing.*

T. If any ſuch change there were, we ſhould grant it to be miraculous: but what a ſtrange ſort of miracle is this that after it's wrought, there's yet no appearance of it? We diſpute not about the manner how it's wrought, but we ſay we can perceive no ſuch thing to be done. It was not thus in the inſtance he gives, for though the World was made of nothing in a miraculous manner, yet being made, the works of God do viſibly appear, and ſo do declare his inviſible power and Godhead. But if now a Man ſhould tell us that God had created a New Heaven, and a New Earth, whilſt we can ſee no manner of change, but all things

continue as they were in the old World, who would believe him? yet such is the invisible change they plead for in the Sacrament; which is such a sort of miracle as never was heard tell of either in the Old Testament or the New. For the miracles which our Blessed Saviour wrought, they plainly appear'd to the senses of those who were present, by that means confirming their belief of his Doctrine. The Doctrine was to be *believed*, but the miracle was to be *seen*, which confirm'd that Doctrine. To instance in one for all, When the water was turn'd into wine (*Joh.* 2.) it was now seen and tasted to be true wine, only it was much better than common wine. Otherwise do you think, if it had still had the colour, the smell and the taste of water, that the people would have been perswaded it was turned into wine? Would they have been satisfied with an odd story, that the substance was Wine, though the accidents of water still remain'd, or with any such idle unintelligible talk? Would such a sort of miracle as this that could no way be perceived, ever have been believed? Or would the pretence to such miracles ever have gain'd Disciples to our Saviour? And yet such a one is this of Transubstantiation.

L. *So very strange and unaccountable it is, that it never ought to be admitted without very good proof.*

T. And is it not then almost as strange that ever any man should believe so absurd a Doctrine, not only without good proof, but even against the expres words of Scripture, as well as against his reason and senses?

L. *No matter for sense and reason, they cry, but how do you prove it to be against Scripture?*

T. It may be proved from those places which tell us of our Saviours being received into Heaven (as *Act.* 3. 21.) and he cannot at the same time be corporally present upon Earth and in Heaven too.

L. *But did he not appear to St.* Paul *and others after his Ascension?*

T. Yes,

T. Yes, he did so, yet does not this prove him to be then corporally present; for he might render himself visible to them without descending, as he did to St. *Stephen*, or he might appear to them in a Vision, and make himself present to their imagination: Or he might be said to appear to them by his Angel whom he sent. For thus in Scripture, it's commonly said, God appear'd to this or that Man, when he sent his Angel to him with some message. But besides this, the plain words of the Evangelists, when they relate the institution of this Holy Sacrament, do directly contradict this Doctrine of Transubstantiation. For they tell us that our Saviour *took Bread and blessed it, and brake it*; even the very same that he took that he bless't, and what he bless't that he broke, and what is this but true bread, as to its natural substance? Only in a mystical and spiritual sense, it was made the Body of Christ by Consecration. And thus also St. *Paul* calls it Bread after Consecration, no less than three times in three Verses together, 1 *Cor.* 11. 26, &c.

L. *This my Author grants, but says it's called so, because the external accidents of bread do still remain.*

T. That is because the colour, shape and taste of bread do still remain, with all other qualities of common bread. Now I beseech you can there be any better or surer way to discover what is the substance or nature of a thing, than by such accidents, such outward sensible appearances as these? How can we distinguish bread from a stone, or water from wine, but by the colour, the smell, the taste or the like? And thus do we here distinguish bread from flesh, and wine from blood; and do believe that to be bread which is both call'd so in Scripture, and which our own eyes discern to be indeed so.

L. *But he says, Faith will teach us otherwise from the Word of God.*

T. Nay on the contrary, you see God's Word calls

it bread after the Consecration, and therefore both our faith and our senses assure us that it is bread. Nor does this in the least contradict our Saviour's words when he says, *This is my body:* for so it is in a spiritual sense, whilst yet the substance of bread remains unchanged, and therefore most properly is it called Bread, which it could in no wise be, if no such substance was there. Yet still we say that by partaking of these holy Elements of Bread and Wine, we do really partake of Christ's body and blood, though in a spiritual manner, according to St. *Paul*'s expression, 1 *Cor.* 10. 16. Do you judge then who keeps closest to Scripture in this point they or we.

L. *To me it seems plain that the Doctrine and Language of our Church is no less agreeable to Scripture than to Reason. And I still discover what injury they do us, whilst they charge us with holding, that the Sacrament is only the figure of Christ's Body.*

T. It is (as I have already said) a most false charge: for though it be the figure of his Body, and expressly called so by some ancient Writers, yet we own it to be much more than so. For in this holy Sacrament are given to us Christ's body and blood, whilst the blessings and benefits of his Death and Passion are made over to and bestow'd upon the worthy receiver. And so our Church expresses it in the Office at the Communion, *We do spiritually eat the Flesh of Christ, and drink his Blood: Christ dwelleth in us and we in him: we are one with Christ and he with us.*

L. *Yet they say, we make the Sacraments of the New Testament in effect no better than the Old, since the Passover and such like were figures of Christ, whereas in the New Testament is to be given the real verity.*

T. A most plain difference we make, whatever they say to the contrary: for besides that our Sacraments are few and easie, clear and intelligible, it is

to

to be conſidered, that under the Law were uſed types and ſhadows which prefigured Chriſt to come, and that ſomewhat obſcurely, whereas the Sacraments now uſed do moſt plainly ſhew him to be already come, and to have died for our ſins, and riſen again according to the Scriptures. Herein moreover is made to us a more plenteous communication of grace and comfort, as the fruit of his Death and Reſurrection, according to that of the Evangeliſt, *The law was given by Moſes, but grace and truth came by Jeſus Chriſt*, Joh. 1. 17. Yet after all we aſſert that the Elements made uſe of in theſe Sacraments of the New Teſtament are no more changed, as to their natural ſubſtance, than thoſe of the Old: that is, they are ſtill Sacraments, outward viſible ſigns and repreſentations of Spiritual things, and are not changed into thoſe very things themſelves which they are deſigned to repreſent and hold forth to us, And this is granted by the Papiſts themſelves as to one of the Sacraments, *viz.* that of Baptiſm. For the water herein made uſe of ſtill remains water. It is not turned into the natural blood of Chriſt; and yet by virtue of that blood, which this water repreſents, are our ſins waſht away in this *Laver of Regeneration*. Hence then it is moſt evident, that the efficacy of the Sacrament conſiſts not in having the natural ſubſtance of the Elements altered; for then there would be no virtue in Baptiſm. And conſequently neither doth the excellency of the Sacraments of the New Teſtament above thoſe of the Old conſiſt in any ſuch alteration: for if it did, then Baptiſm ſhould not be prefer'd before Circumciſion, or any of the waſhings and ſprinklings uſed under the Law, ſince in Baptiſm water ſtill remains true water. And if this be no diſadvantage or diſhonour to the holy Sacrament of Baptiſm, then no more is it to the other Sacrament that the Bread and Wine uſed therein do ſtill remain true Bread and Wine as to their Natural ſubſtance after Conſecration.

L. *I cannot imagin any reason for the puting a difference in this case betwixt the two Sacraments. And I do a little wonder they should be so careless as to use an argument, which if it had any truth or force in it, would plainly tend to the disparaging of the Sacrament of Baptism.*

T. You must not expect good arguments in a bad cause: but has your Author no better than these?

L. *I find no more arguments on this subject, only he makes use of a similitude, that if a Father should leave to his Son his House and Garden by his last Will, would the Son understand by this the Picture of the House and Garden, or the things themselves in truth? In like manner he infers that our Saviour has not left us the bare figures of his Body and Blood, but these very substances in the Sacrament.*

T. Rather we may infer that in like manner did our blessed Saviour truly give up himself for us on the Cross, there shedding his blood for the remission of our sins, and doth in this Holy Sacrament really confer the blessings purchased by his death upon all true believers, and by this means he does most truly give himself to them according to his promise; even much more to their advantage than if he had given them his natural flesh and blood in the Sacrament.

L. *I think my Author's Simile does him little service.*

T. Service do you say? rather if you consider it well, it will be found to make directly against his own opinion. For suppose your Father had left you an House and Land by his Will, and appointed some body after his death to put you in possession of it, by giving you a key, and a turf or twig: when this is done, do you take this key to be the very house, or the turf or twig to be the land? no surely, but only in effect and in the sense of the Law they are so, since by these the house and land are made over to you; and by receiving them you are put in actual possession of them as fully and effectually as if the whole house and all the land

land had been put into your hands, if that had been possible. And thus, I say, by these Holy Elements doth our Blessed Saviour make over himself and all the blessings of the Covenant to his faithful people.

L. The resemblance is very plain, and helps me still better to understand, how fitly the Body and blood of Christ may be said to be verily and indeed received by the faithful in the Lords Supper, without giving the least countenance to this Doctrine of Transubstantiation.

T. That you may be sure of, these being the very words used in our Church-Catechism; and many the like expressions we find in the Office at the Communion, some of which I mention'd before. Yet all this while it's well known how utterly our Church disowns this absurd opinion, so contrary to sense and reason, and to the express words of Scripture as I have shew'd. Yet give me leave in a few words further to manifest how, without admitting this opinion, we may very properly affirm, That Christ is verily and indeed received by the faithful in this holy Supper, *viz.*

(1) In a moral sense, as Servants receive their Master by taking Earnest, and Subjects their Prince by taking the Oath of Allegiance. For here we do solemnly profess our selves the Disciples, servants and Subjects of the blessed Jesus; and by taking these holy symbols of Bread and Wine, do receive him as our Lord and Saviour, to whom we promise and vow all humble obedience, and through whom alone we hope for mercy and salvation.

(2) Here also do we receive those graces of his holy Spirit which transform us into his likeness, so that Christ himself may be said to come into us, to take possession of us, and to dwell in us and we in him, even by faith and love, and by our likeness to him in all humility, purity, charity, and those other graces which make us partakers of a Divine Nature, and may well

well be stiled *Christ in us the hope of glory*; all which are confirmed and increased by our worthy communicating at this holy Table. So that passing by other things that might be added to this purpose, you may hence see how properly the Holy Elements may be called the Body and Blood of Christ, of which they are the Sacrament and Symbol, and which they do really convey to us as much to our advantage, as if they were changed into the very natural substance of what they represent. For suppose we should eat Christs natural Flesh, and drink his blood, what are our Souls the better for this, if the graces of his Spirit do not accompany them? But if these graces are bestow'd on us by our worthy receiving of the Holy Elements of Bread and Wine, what loss is it to us that these remain unchanged as to their substance?

L. *None at all that I can imagin.*

T. You may be sure of it, since what is bodily, reaches only to the Body and not to the Soul of Man. For as our Saviour tells us (*Matt.* 15. 11.) *That what enters into the Mouth defiles not a Man*, of which he after gives the reason, *because it passeth into the belly and thence into the draught*: So neither can that which enters into the Mouth, of it self purifie and cleanse the Soul of Man, because it's only received into the body, and so passes through it. And this is that Doctrine which, I have formerly told you, our Blessed Saviour himself most plainly teaches, *Joh.* 6. 63. when he corrected the gross mistake of the dull *Capernaites*.

L. *Yet how gross soever it was, the* Papists *at this day seem to continue in it, as if Christ had promised to give Men his natural Flesh to eat.*

T. And this they do, contrary to our Saviours own explication of himself in *vers.* 63. and to other places of Scripture before named, and also contrary to all true Reason. We will not set up our own shallow reasonings against

against the Holy Scripture, but are ready most firmly to believe whatever we find therein plainly revealed. And there we may find some things *above* our Reason, though nothing *contrary* to it. But now this Popish Doctrine of Transubstantiation is both contrary to plain Scripture, and is also full of so many palpable absurdities and contradictions that it were almost endless to name them. Yet the more to confirm you against it, if need be, let me mention a few of those many. As for instance according to this opinion, our Saviours body would be in ten thousand places at once, *viz.* where ever the Consecrated host (as they call it) is. At *Rome* and at *Paris*, in the *East-Indies*, and the *West*; and in thousands of Churches where it's reserved. And in one place Christs body would rest upon the Altar, in another it might be carrying toward a sick Man. It would be in one Priests box, and in anothers hand; in this mans Mouth, and in that mans stomach; and all this one and the same body still. Yea thus it must have been ever since the first institution of this Sacrament, above sixteen hundred years ago. Millions of Men in the several ages and places of the World would all have eaten this self-same body a thousand times over and yet still it remains whole and untouched, the very same that it was from the beginning, neither multipli'd nor divided, neither encreased nor diminished. Again, by this Doctrine, every wafer and every part of the wafer is the whole body, and a thousand wafers are only that one. Yea, what is more prodigious, (if any thing can be so) according to this opinion, our Blessed Saviour when he was present with his Apostles alive and well, did then give himself into their hands to be eaten by them. So that he was in their Mouths and bellies at the same time that he was sitting amongst them, and yet never shewed the least sign, nor felt the least effect of any such change upon him. And yet after all, this same Body was next

day

day offered up, and his Blood poured out on the Cross. It deserves also to be considered how the breaking of Christ's natural Body, and eating & swallowing it, is consistent with its being still alive, as surely they will grant it is. Yea, how this same Body should be at God's right hand shining in honour and glory, and yet at the same time be set upon the Altar, or carried in a Box, yea, eaten by Mice, or by Worms and Flies. But no questions must be asked, no doubts or scruples raised, all must be swallowed with an implicite Faith, and they think to solve all well enough, with crying, nothing is impossible with God; which any Man may as well pretend, to justifie the grossest falsehoods & absurdities in the World. Though truly I think none can be imagined greater than what this opinion stands justly charged with. That so mighty a change should be made in the very natural substance of the Bread, and yet that there is no manner of appearance of it; but still here is the same colour, taste, smell, and all other accidents or qualities of Bread, after Consecration as before. And notwithstanding all this, we must believe that there is no substance of Bread to which these accidents belong, but the substance of Flesh without any accidents at all. What strange prodigious fancies are these? And what a scandal is it to our Religion, what a mighty hindrance to the belief of it, when such an unreasonable opinion shall be proposed as an Article of Faith? And be made of equal necessity to be believed with the great Doctrines of the Trinity and Incarnation, though it has no manner of support from the Holy Scripture, as I have before shewn?

L. *I confess, if a Man thought he could not be a Christian without receiving this Opinion, it would be a strong temptation to Infidelity, & go nigh to make him reject our whole Religion.*

T. Doubtless it would; I & fear it has often produced this effect: *Woe be to them by whom the offence cometh.* Yea, further, it will appear, that on some other accounts,

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this Doctrine directly tends to promote Infidelity; whilst (as many Learned Writers have observed) it does in a great measure evacuate and overthrow the main proofs of the Truth of Christianity. For one great Argument our Saviour made use of was, the Miracles which he wrought: *The works which I do* (saith he) *bear witness of me. If you believe not me, believe me for the works sake.* Now to make this Argument of any force, it must be supposed that their Senses did not deceive them, but what they saw and heard was really true. For if our Senses are not to be relied on, in judging of their own proper Objects at a due distance, how could the people tell but that all these Miracles were meer cheats & delusions? But if they had sufficient assurance that they were truly wrought, because they saw them with their own eyes, & thereupon had sufficient ground to believe that Religion to be true which was confirmed by them; then have we as good reason to believe Transubstantiation to be most false, since our Senses do as fully assure us that it is so. And hence we are very certain that this could be none of the Doctrines which our Saviour taught, because there would have been a direct contradiction betwixt the Doctrine it self, and the Argument made use of to prove it: for whilst he appeals to his Miracles, he supposes that Men may trust their Senses in the discerning of proper Objects, whereas according to this Doctrine, no trust is to be given to them. Moreover we know that our Saviours Resurrection was the great confirmation of his Doctrine, and did demonstrate him to be the Son of God, the promised Messiah. Now, how should it be known that the same Jesus who was Crucified was indeed risen from the dead, but by their sight of him, and converse with him? Thus we read what full satisfaction it pleased our Saviour to give to S. *Thomas* in this respect, permitting him to put his Fingers into the print of the Nails, and to thrust

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his hand into his side, and by this means all his doubts were removed. Now the same ground that St. *Thomas* had to believe that the Body which was wounded and hung dead on the Cross was after raised again, the very same have we to believe, that the Bread and Wine in the Sacrament are not turned into the natural substance of Christ's Body and Blood, even the full evidence of our Senses. Whereas if St. *Thomas* and the rest of the Apostles, at the institution of this Holy Sacrament, a little before Christs Death, had found their Senses to be so grosly deceived as Papists would perswade us, I know not how they could well have trusted them so soon after his Resurrection, as we find they did. If then the Apostles had good reason to believe the Resurrection of Christ to be true; so have we to rest assured that this Doctrine of Transubstantiation is most false. Yea, let me add, if we are sure that these words, *This is my body*, are in the Gospel, then so sure we may be that they cannot be taken in that gross sense which *Papists* put upon them: for as we know them to be there, because there we *see* them and *read* them; so do we as plainly see, that after Consecration, the Bread and Wine still remain in their natural substances, and therefore are made the Body and Blood of Christ in a spiritual and mystical sense, according to the most common acceptance of such Phrases that relate to Sacraments, as was before shewn.

L. You need add nothing more to clear this matter, nor can I imagine what reply they can make, except they shall say that we must not in this case trust our senses, but exercise our Faith.

T. This indeed they do say, but with no manner of reason: For though God requires the Exercise of our Faith in Believing what he hath revealed, though our senses cannot reach to, or discern it; yet we never read in the whole Book of Scripture, that ever he requires Men to believe any thing directly contrary to the evidence of their Senses; to believe it was dark at midnight

midnight, when they ſaw the Sun ſhining at Noonday; to believe the ſame Man to lye dead in his Grave, whom they ſaw alive walking before them: For at this rate all our Saviours Miracles had been wrought in vain, if Men muſt not believe their own eyes, as we uſe to ſay. For we muſt conſider that Almighty God hath ſo framed our Nature, that we are to be directed and guided by our Senſes in thoſe matters that properly belong to them. Nor can we, I think, in this preſent ſtate, have more clear and full aſſurance of any thing than what our Senſes, when ſound and perfect, convey to us. And therefore, I have ſaid, our Saviour took this way to give aſſurance of the truth of his Goſpel, and of his Reſurrection, by that ſatisfaction he gave to the very Senſes of Men. Thus St. *John*, when he would give the cleareſt and fulleſt evidence of the truth of Chriſtian Doctrine, he tells us, *That which we have heard, which we have ſeen with our eyes, which our hands have handled, declare we unto you*, 1 Joh. 1. 1, 2, 3. Now all this may aſſure us that thoſe words, *This is my body*, are not to be taken in ſuch a ſenſe as would engage us to the belief of Tranſubſtantiation. Nay, the Word of God it ſelf aſſures us that they are not, ſince in this word, as I have ſhewn from many places, the Holy Bread in the Sacrament is called Bread after Conſecration, and therefore are we ſo to believe it; and are to look upon it as his Body Spiritually and Sacramentally; and ſo neither one Text contradicts another, nor will our Faith contradict our Senſes.

L. *This is eaſie and intelligible, and neither offers violence to the Word of God, nor to the Reaſon of our own Minds.*

T. Yet further, let me add, if the Senſes of all Men throughout the whole World are thus deceived, as they muſt be if Tranſubſtantiation be true, then is all certainty of any thing whatever in a manner utterly deſtroyed. How can I tell that I tread upon the Earth, that I ſee the Heavens over my head, or the Sun

shining in the Firmament? In these, and all other things which I think that I see or hear, my Senses may be imposed upon, as well as in the present Case. And how then can I be sure that any Revelation was ever made from God to Man? Or how could any Man be sure of it, though a Voice came to him from Heaven or a Vision appeared to him? All this may be but idle fancy and delusion; his Hearing and his Sight are not to be trusted. Yea, let this opinion be admitted, and how can we be certain of the truth of that which God hath in his Word revealed? For if he deceive me one way, why not another? The same Holy and True God who hath revealed his Will in Holy Scriptures, hath also made another sort of Revelation in the works of Nature. He hath given me Senses of Seeing, Hearing, *&c.* and hath proposed Objects agreeable thereto. Now, if I believe him to be so Holy and Good that he will not deceive me in his Word, why may I not from the same Goodness argue that he will not deceive me in his Works? But if he should do it in the latter, why may he not in the former also?

L. *They may say this is a particular Case, and therefore though our Senses may herein be mistaken, yet we have no reason to suspect them at other times.*

T. A particular Case it is indeed, and such as nothing like it can be instanced in, nor yet any good reason assigned why our Senses may not at any other time be deceived as well as in this matter. But strangest of all it is, that we have no warning given us in Scripture not to trust our Senses in this particular Case, though in all others we may: Nor do we find any thing said to take off the prejudice that might arise in mens minds against so strange a Doctrine. We hear of no Objections made of old against it by the Enemies of Christianity; nor of any Answers given to silence or prevent such Objections. Nay, on the contrary, as I have

have said, when the *Capernaites* mistook our Saviour's meaning, he let them know that his Discourse was to be understood in a spiritual sense, *Joh.* 6. 63. Thus certainly the Apostles understood it, as also those Words, *This is my Body*, else surely we should have heard of their doubts and objections; at least they would have made some further enquiry about the sense and meaning of them: Else how comes it to pass that we never find the least mention of this same Doctrine in any of the Apostles Sermons, or in the Epistles written to any of the Churches? Nay, though there was so fair an occasion offered to St. *Paul*, when he discourses about the Lords Supper, 1 *Cor.* 11. where he tells them, that *what he had received of the Lord*, he *delivered to them*; but he is there so far from explaining or asserting the Doctrine of Transubstantiation, that he teaches the direct contrary, in calling it Bread over and over after Consecration.

L. *Yet I have heard some arguing for it from those words of his, that he who eats and drinks unworthily, is guilty of the Body and Blood of Christ*, Vers. 27. *Now, say they, how could this be so hainous a sin, if the Natural Body and Blood of Christ were not present in the Sacrament?*

T. For that, let the Apostles own words decide it; for he there tells us, that he who eats this *Bread*, and drinks this *Cup* unworthily, is thus guilty. So that it is Bread which is eaten, and (consequently) Wine which is drunk by the Receiver: But to do this unworthily and irreverently, rushing upon it as a common meal, not duly considering the great importance and design of this Holy Sacrament, as it is a commemoration of Christ's death, and a Spiritual Feast upon his Body and Blood, this must needs be an hainous Sin; being an affront to Christ himself, and a profanation of his Sacred Ordinance. This is meant by their *not discerning the Lords Body*, vers. 29.

And to receive these Holy Elements without reverence, thankfulness, and true devotion, was to be guilty of dishonouring the Body and Blood of Christ, which were here represented and exhibited to Believers. But all this while we have no reason hence to fancy, that the natural substance of Christ's Body and Blood are present in the Sacrament. Had the Apostle thought of any such thing, surely he would have expresst himself in another manner, and have said somewhat to explain so Mysterious a Doctrine. And had he and his Brethren taught the same as the Church of *Rome* now does, surely the unbelieving *Jews* or *Gentiles* would have poured forth their Objections against it, whereas we hear not a word of that nature, neither in the Apostles Days, or the next Ages after. In all the Apologies that the first Christian Writers set forth in defence of our Religion, we find nothing said in vindication of any such Opinion as this, whilst they give large Answers to many other Objections, for which there was nothing like so good a pretence. Nor do we read of any controversy amongst Christians themselves about this matter for many Ages; whereas in latter times, since this Opinion was first broached, there have been many Volumes written for, and against it.

L. *But they pretend that this was the Ancient Opinion of the Fathers and first Christians.*

T. Pretend it they do, but as in other points of Controversy betwixt them and us, so here it is a very vain and false pretence: For we read nothing of it in the old Creeds, or the Canons of General Councils, or in the genuine works of any Father for many hundred years after our Saviour.

L. *Yet they alledge that the Fathers commonly stile the Holy Elements the Body and Blood of Christ, and will frequently quote places to that purpose.*

T. No doubt but they may easily do that, though without

without any advantage to their Cause, since it's plain enough in what sense those expressions are to be understood from other places of the same Fathers: For they themselves do sometimes tell us, that Christ's Words of eating his Flesh, and drinking his Blood, are to be taken Spiritually; that in the Communion there is a commemoration of his Death, and a representation of his Body and Blood; yea, sometimes they expressly call the Bread and Wine the Figures thereof. Now these and such like sayings cannot possibly be reconciled with the Popish opinion of Transubstantiation. Therefore when they speak of Christ's Body and Blood in the Sacrament, we may most reasonably understand them in the very same sence that I have told you our Church frequently uses the like expressions: So do our Writers very commonly in their Books of devotion, and in practical discourses on the Communion speak at the same rate, whilst they intend nothing more, but that these Holy Elements are made Christ's Body and Blood mystically and spiritually. But how far this opinion of Transubstantiation is from being an ancient Doctrine of the Christian Church, hath been made sufficiently evident (amongst many others) by the Learned Bishop *Cozens*, who in his History of it, gives us an account about what time it was first publickly taught, what opposition was then made to it by sundry Learned Men of that Age, and how long it was before it could be established by any Council, even amongst *Papists* themselves, or could obtain to be the general avowed Doctrine of their Church. Nay, to this very day, their chief Writers are strangely divided in the accounts they give of it, setting their Wits upon the rack to explain and defend it; some this way, and some that, having so very little help from Holy Scripture in the Case, as some of them are so ingenuous as to acknowledge.

L. *Methinks it's strange that they should with so much eagerness maintain, and with so much violence impose a Doctrine, which to me seems impossible to be understood, or firmly believed.*

T. Strange it is, and very unreasonable, but yet some account may be given of it; for beside that natural pride which inclines men to defend the opinion which they have once espoused (especially a Church which boasts of Infallibility) besides this, I say, we may consider how mightily the admitting of this opinion makes for the Honour of the Priest, who can thus, with four words speaking, work one of the most wonderful Miracles that ever was known in the world; indeed such a one as can neither be seen, felt, nor understood. But the people who can be perswaded to believe it, must needs have a mighty veneration for the Priest that works it; and be almost ready to make a God of him, who can so easily make a God for them, by turning the Bread into the very person of our Saviour, his Divinity and Humanity; whom therefore they worship and adore as God, though after that they eat him.

L. *This may seem indeed to make for the Honour of the Priest, that he can work such wonders; but surely it makes little for the Honour either of Priest or People to be guilty of such false and absurd opinions, and of such corrupt practices which are the natural consequence of them. For are they not guilty of Idolatry in worshipping the Bread as God (though I know they say there is no Bread there after Consecration) pray let me know your judgment, because I find my Author endeavouring to vindicate their Church from this heavy censure.*

T. I do not see how they can possibly excuse themselves from this charge, if the Bread still remains Bread in its natural substance, as we may most certainly conclude it does, from what hath been alledged both from Scripture, Reason and our Senses. Wherefore whilst they worship that for God which is not God, giving

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to the creature what is due alone to the Creator, they may justly be reckoned guilty of Idolatry.

L. *But will it not serve to excuse them, that they worship that which they take to be God, and therefore do design and direct their Worship to God, and not to the Bread, which they believe not to be there after Consecration, though they see it before them?*

T. What allowances it may please our good God to make for the ignorance and mistakes of honest, well-meaning men, I still say, it doth not beseem us to determine: But as to the thing it self, for my own part, I cannot see how this pretence will any more excuse a *Papist* from Idolatry, than it would excuse an Heathen for his Worship of the Sun, that he did verily believe the Sun to be God, or that God did in some extraordinary manner dwell in the Sun, the substance of it being turned into God, whilst only the accidents of Light and Heat, and the like, do still remain. Nay, one would think the Heathen in some respect more excusable of the two, since the Sun looks much liker a God, than does a Wafer or bit of Bread.

But there is no great need of disputing against them in this Case, since several Writers of their own Church do freely grant, that if this Doctrine of Transubstantiation be not true, then they may justly be charged with as gross Idolatry as ever was practised in the World. And most certainly this Doctrine is not true, if any regard may be had to God's Holy Word, to clear Reason, to our own Senses, or to the most ancient Christian Writers; and what they would have more I cannot tell.

L. *I am perfectly satisfied with your Discourse on this point, and shall therefore proceed to some other particular.*

T. It's high time you should; and I shall take care to be briefer in the rest: only I was willing to insist the longer on this, because they reckon it so weighty and important a Doctrine of their Church; for the denial

of which, they look upon us as damnable Hereticks, and when they have had power in their hands, have treated us accordingly, even with all that bloudy rage and cruelty, which the Idolatrous Heathens of old used toward the Primitive Christians. Hereby also you may be convinced how utterly unlawful it is to hold Communion with the Church of *Rome*, which is guilty of Idolatry in this her worship of the Host, and imposes the same upon all that joyn with her; and therefore what great Reason there was for the Reformation at the first, and for our refusal to this day, to pollute our Souls by a compliance with such abominations, which for ought I can see, is as utterly unlawful (even though a Man lived in the Dominions of a Popish Prince) as it was for the three Children to fall down and worship the golden Image at *Nebuchadnezzar*'s command. And as chearfully might any good Christian venture upon the fiercest flames in this Cause, as they did in theirs, resting assured, if not of a deliverance, yet of the Crown and Glory of Martyrs, which is a thousand times better. And, to conclude, when by this instance you are so plainly convinced what a gross and palpable errour is expresly taught, and stifly maintained by the *Roman* Church (and as a judgment upon them, they seem fallen into it for a discovery of their falshood) you may thence easily inferr what opinion is to be had of the Infallibility of that Church; and so will be better prepared for the receiving a discovery of any other of their Errors, as it shall happen to be made to you: To which purpose let us now proceed.

CHAP. VIII.

Concerning the Sacrifice of the Mass.

I. *THE next point mentioned in my Author, is that of the Mass, which he says little about, but that it*

it is the unbloody Sacrifice which Christ offered at his last Supper, and which he commanded his Apostles to offer for the commemoration of his death.

T. This belongs to what we have just now been so largely discoursing of: Only you are to take notice, that the common Doctrine among them is, that at the Mass, as they call it, or at the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, there is a true Sacrifice offered, which is propitiatory both for the quick, and the dead, (*viz.* such as are in Purgatory) that is, tends to procure the pardon of their Sins, and freedom from punishment. And this they call an unbloody Sacrifice, to distinguish it from that which our Blessed Saviour offered on the Cross, when he shed his Blood for us: Though how it can be unbloody, whilst the natural Substance of Blood is there, according to their principles, is not easie to understand; nor how that can be fitly called a commemoration of his death, which they say is a Sacrifice of Christ, who is there corporally present. But in the mean time, this notion of a Sacrifice, if taken strictly and properly, is a meer fiction, not having the least countenance from Holy Scripture, where we read only that Christ offered up himself a Sacrifice for us on the Cross, but not a word of his doing it the night before, when he instituted the Holy Communion, nor of his being daily offered up by the Priest to make atonement for sins. Nay, we expressly read, *Heb.* 9. 26, 27, 28. that he only *once offered up himself*, and is now *gone to appear in the presence of God for us*, but there's nothing said of his being offered up to God by others. We do indeed freely grant, that in this Holy Sacrament we make a solemn commemoration of that Sacrifice which Christ offered up, and so may be said to represent to the Father what his Son hath suffered on our behalf, that he may graciously incline to bestow on us those Blessings which were so dearly purchased

purchased for us. And we do in some sort feast upon this Sacrifice, by our eating and drinking of these holy Elements. Here also we do make a Sacrifice, or an Oblation of our selves, both Souls and Bodies, unto God, as is expresst in our Liturgy, in the Prayer after Receiving; and here, lastly, we do offer up our Thanksgivings and Praises, as also our Silver and Gold in Charity and Almsgivings, which are the Christian Sacrifices still to be used under the Gospel, and with which we read God is well pleased, *Heb.* 13. 16. And in some of these senses are we to understand the Ancients, when they speak of a Sacrifice or Oblation made to God at the Holy Table: Especially if we consider, that the Custom amongst them was, as Learned Men inform us, for the richer sort to bring good store of provision to this Table, which they presented as their Oblation or Christian Sacrifice. And out of these was taken the Bread and Wine which were Consecrated and made use of in the Holy Communion, and the rest was either spent in their Love-feasts, or went to the Poor, and to the Clergy.

L. As there seems little reason to stile the Lord's-Supper a Sacrifice, save in the sense you have explained it, so there seems yet less why they should call it a Sacrifice for the dead as well as the living.

T. Indeed there is no Reason at all for it, nor so much as any colour from Scripture: But this depends upon their dream of Purgatory, of which we have already spoken; an Opinion, I told you, very gainful to the Church on many accounts; and particularly this Custom of having Masses for the dead, though it yields no profit to the dead themselves, yet it brings in much to the living, I mean to the Priests, who receive great store of Money for these their Masses, which is sometimes left by the deceased person himself, and sometimes given by his Friends on his behalf; this being

being generally looked upon in their Church, as a work of extraordinary Charity; and you may be sure warmly enough urged by the Priests, and earnestly pleaded for from the very same principle that made the Silver-smiths so zealous for *Diana*, even because their Trade and Gain depended upon her Honour, *Act.* 19. 27. But whatever there may be of seeming Charity to a dead Friend, or of real profit to the living Priest in this device, most certainly it hath an apparent tendency to the ruine of precious Souls, and is a mighty prejudice to Piety and Holiness of Life, as hath formerly been said: For if Men can once perswade themselves, that after death there may be satisfaction made for the neglects and miscarriages of their Life, what wonder if they are now careless and licentious? And instead of *working out their own salvation* themselves, *with fear and trembling*, they will be apt to leave the trouble of that work to their Executors and to the Priests, by their Masses and Prayers to do it for them. But woe be to those miserable Souls who build their hopes on such ruinous foundations; and woe be to those Teachers who betray them to ruine by such delusions, thereby *serving their own bellies, rather than the Lord Jesus*, and the interest of Religion. But *let us be wise now in this our day, to consider the things that belong to our peace, before they be hid from our eyes.* Now by a speedy Repentance and thorow Reformation, let us see to make our peace with God through Jesus Christ, in this day of Grace and Patience; but if we neglect this present season, there remains hereafter *no more Sacrifice for Sin, but a certain fearful looking for of Divine vengeance*, which will be the portion of all wilful neglecters and contemners of Grace and Mercy. But let us go on with your Author.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

Of having Prayers in an unknown Tongue.

L. *HE next goes about to vindicate their use of the Latine Tongue in the Mass, and the rest of their Service.*

T. And pray what can he alledge in vindication of their using this Language, when the people understand it not?

L. *Why, first he says that the Priestly Garments, and the ceremonies they use may serve to instruct them: for he had before said how useful their ceremonies are for the exciting of devotion; and then for further instruction they must go to Catechisms and Sermons.*

T. They had need to be very ingenious people who can learn from Priests garments and dumb ceremonies what's the meaning of *Latin* Prayers. Nay their multitude of ceremonies are so far from instructing the ignorant people, that rather they need much instruction to know the meaning of them. And instead of exciting devotion, they rather extinguish and suppress it, by amusing their minds, and pleasing their senses with a great deal of pomp and pageantry. Whatever instructions their Priests may give at Catechisms and Sermons, they are not like to make them understand Prayers uttered in a strange Language.

L. *He further adds that simple ignorant people may easily be mistaken, if these high mysteries were done in the vulgar tongue.*

T. A wise method truly, to keep people in ignorance for fear they should run into mistakes: as if a man should blindfold a Traveller to prevent his missing the way But one would think they should here rather employ themselves in the Catechisms and Sermons they talk of, to give the people due instruction for the preventing those mistakes they seem so much afraid of. Though by the course they take with them, in this and other instances, it's plain enough they are more

more afraid of the peoples getting too much knowledg. And no wonder, whilſt it's a common ſaying amongſt them, that Ignorance is the Mother of Devotion; and ſo truly it is of the devotion, or rather the ſuperſtition of the *Romiſh* Church; whereas the moſt clear and ſolid knowledg of the will and word of God is the Mother of true Chriſtian piety and devotion. But has your Author no better reaſons than theſe for this abſurd practice?

L. *Other reaſons he has, whether better or not, do you judg. He ſays it makes for the union of the Latin Church, that Prieſts travelling into other Countries may ſay Maſs where ever they come.*

T. Very ſollicitous they appear for the union of the *Latin* Church, that is of their own party, and in the mean time care little what diviſions they make in the Chriſtian Church for their own carnal ends. But of mighty conſequence is this project for union which your Author mentions. For what need is there I beſeech you that a Prieſt in a foreign Countrey ſhould officiate there where they may have Prieſts of their own to do it? And can there not be union enough betwixt foreign Churches, and the Prieſts that belong to them, in their profeſſion of the ſame faith, and owning the ſame worſhip, except they ſpeak the ſame language, and uſe the very ſame words. One would think they ſhould rather conſult for an union betwixt Prieſt and people, that they might joyn together at the ſame time in the ſame prayers, but this they regard not. It's enough it ſeems with them for the people to be ſpectators only even at publick prayers as well as at the Communion, though they neither underſtand the one nor partake of the other. For very uſual it is with them for the Prieſts alone to take the Sacrament, whilſt the people ſtand by and look on: a moſt corrupt Cuſtom and meer innovation, contrary to the firſt inſtitution and deſign of this Holy Ordinance

nance, and to the practice of all antiquity. And as that cannot properly be called a Communion where Priests and people do not communicate together, so neither are those to be stiled common prayers in which they do not joyn in common. Nor has your Author hitherto produced any thing like a reason for this Custom of theirs.

L. *And I doubt, you'l think his last argument as weak as any,* viz. *that the holy Scriptures have been written in* Latin, Greek *and* Hebrew, *these three languages being written upon Christs Cross, they are therefore called Sacred, and it's permitted to these three Nations to use them at Mass.*

T. I confess I am utterly to seek for the force of this argument, if it be fit to call it so, whilst it argues just nothing to the purpose. The holy Scriptures were written originally in *Hebrew* and *Greek*, and have been translated not only into *Latin* but several other Languages, for the benefit of those of several Nations, who were converted to Christianity, (of which more hereafter) and accordingly they had their worship also celebrated in the same languages which the people understood, as our ancestors in this Kingdom had. And this surely every mans own reason may tell him is most profitable and necessary in order to true devotion, that they may understandingly and affectionately joyn with the Priest in the publick worship and service. This you will find expresly delivered by the Apostle *Paul* himself in 1 *Cor.* 14. 16. &c. where he disapproves the use of strange Tongues in the Church, as not tending to edification, for that he who understood them not could not say *Amen* to the Prayers or Praises uttered in those unknown Tongues. As to those three Languages he mentions being written upon the Cross, and therefore allow'd to be used in publick worship, it is such an idle & insignificant fancy, that I am ashamed to take notice of it. If he had infer'd the quite contrary, that therefore they

they muſt not be uſed, the reaſon had been every whit as good, that is ſtark naught. But what will not Men deviſe, when they are put to their ſhifts?

L. *I wonder what makes them ſo ſtiff in a practice ſo contrary to Reaſon, Scripture, and the uſage of the Primitive Church.*

T. It is not very eaſie to give the reaſon, ſince ſome amongſt themſelves ſeem aſhamed of it; and many of their Biſhops in the Council of *Trent* deſired to have publick Prayers in a known Tongue, but it would not be granted. The reaſon of which (as of many other corruptions being ſtill continued) ſeems to be partly from their fear, that if they ſhould make one alteration, a great many more would follow: (for if they own themſelves to have erred in one thing, why not in more?) and partly to encreaſe the peoples admiration of the Prieſt and his prayers: (for the leſs they underſtand, the more prone they are to admire.) And laſtly, perhaps there may be this peculiar reaſon for it, that hereby the people may more eaſily be perſwaded of the efficacy of the Prieſts words for the working that prodigious miracle of Tranſubſtantiation. For if they ſhould hear him ſpeak only plain words in their own Mother-tongue, they could hardly think them of force enough to work ſuch a mighty change, whereas in hard words there may be ſome hidden virtue which they are not aware of. But let us go on to what follows.

CHAP. X.

Concerning Confeſſion of ſins to the Prieſt in order to his forgiveneſs of them.

L. *MY Author next pleads for the cuſtom of confeſſing ſins to the Prieſt, on account of that power which*

which Christ hath given him to absolve and forgive sins. Joh. 20. 23.

T. As to this matter of Confession of sins in order to absolution, in brief I would have you consider, that anciently when Church-discipline was strictly observed, they who had been guilty of notorious scandalous crimes, were obliged to make satisfaction to the Church, by a publick penitent confession of them: and when they had given sufficient evidence of their repentance by submitting to such penance as was imposed on them, they were then publickly absolved and received into the communion of the Church, from which they were before cast out. And whilst the Bishop or Priest did herein proceed according to the rules of the Gospel, then what they remitted on earth would be remitted in Heaven, *&c.* according to *Joh.* 20. 23. But by degrees through the corruption of the times, and the general looseness of mens manners, this publick Confession was in a great measure laid aside, and instead of it only a private Confession to the Priest required, and absolution commonly granted upon very easie terms, and this is that which is now so zealously pleaded for by those of the *Romish* Church. As to the former, our Church highly approves of it as a godly discipline, and sometimes it is at this day practised amongst us. But as to private confessions, there is no absolute necessity of them at all times. For when our sins have been private, such as have given no offence to the Church, or our Neighbours, but only to almighty God, here it may suffice that we humbly confess them to God himself, speedily forsaking the same, and then shall we be sure to find mercy through our Blessed Saviour: for so God hath promised in his holy word, without requiring us to confess them to Men also.

L. *But they commonly urge that of St.* Jam. 5. 16. *Confess your faults one to another*, &c.

T. This

T. This is indeed very requiſite when men have given offence one to another; but here is no mention of a Prieſt to whom this confeſſion ought to be made. Or ſuppoſe that he is here chiefly intended, yet is this confeſſion no further needful, than as may give evidence of a ſincere repentance, and may ſerve to procure the Prieſts prayers and directions, or ſometimes abſolution. But to this end it's no way neceſſary for a man at all times to confeſs all his private faults.

L. Yes, ſays my Author, we muſt confeſs our ſins to the Prieſt that he may judg of them, and thereupon abſolve the Penitent. For as Treaſons, ſays he, committed againſt the Prince are tried by his Officers, ſo men are to preſent themſelves to the Prieſt as to a Tribunal, that upon confeſſion they may receive forgiveneſs, which the Prieſt grants as Chriſts Lieutenant or Deputy.

T. There is no likeneſs in the caſe, Princes are but finite creatures, and cannot attend to the trial of all cauſes in their own perſons, and therefore they employ their Officers who are to hear them, and to determine according to Law. But Almighty God is himſelf preſent every where, and always ready to receive the humble confeſſions of a penitent ſinner, and upon his ſincere repentance will, for Chriſts ſake, receive him to favour; whilſt neither Prieſt nor any mortal man whatſoever may be privy either to his faults or to his confeſſion of them. And yet to keep to his ſimilitude, As men are not bound to preſent themſelves before the Kings Officers for a Trial, but when the King by his Law requires it; no more are people bound to make confeſſion to the Prieſt further than God by his word enjoyns it: but he has no where enjoyn'd the confeſſion of all our private faults. And as the Kings Judges are to pronounce ſentence according to Law, ſo muſt the Prieſt according to the rules of

the Gospel, otherwise it is unjust and of no force. This then I grant, that so far as God hath appointed Ministers as his Officers to take notice of the crimes of the people, and to pass sentence upon them, so far the people are bound to apply themselves to their Ministers, to follow their directions, and submit to their sentence, which if it be just, God himself will confirm it. Thus when any man is guilty of notorious crimes, and by no admonitions will be reclaim'd, then may the Minister justly proceed to Excommunicate such an obstinate offender from the society and priviledges of the Christian Church; and what he binds on earth shall be bound in Heaven; that is, God approves of this sentence, and will ratifie and confirm it, so that if this man continue thus impenitent in his wickedness, God will shut him out from the Kingdom of Heaven hereafter, whom his Ministers have justly cast out of the Church here. But if this scandalous sinner shall come in and acknowledg his offences, and seriously profess his repentance, and give sufficient evidence of the truth of it, then hath the Minister, whether Bishop or Priest, power to absolve him, to release him from the censures of the Church, and receive him again into communion; and may also upon the truth of this his repentance, assure him of, and declare to him the remission of his sins from God himself, who hath given to his Ministers power to that purpose. And this their sentence shall also be ratified in Heaven, God through his Son Jesus will be reconciled to this sincere penitent, and if he persevere in well-doing, will at length receive him into Glory, who is now admitted into his Church.

L. *All this seems plain and reasonable: but by your discourse, I perceive you judg there is no necessity of confessing private sins in order to their being forgiven.*

T. There

T. There is no need of it, ſince, I ſay, God no where requires it, but hath promiſed pardon on condition of true repentance, which repentance may be very ſincere without any ſuch confeſſion.

L. But is it not very profitable for people to unburden their conſciences to the Miniſter, that they may receive direction and comfort from him?

T. Exceeding profitable no doubt it is, and ſometimes very needful, eſpecially when they are diſturbed with doubts and fears, or aſſaulted by ſtrong temptations of one ſort or other. In ſuch caſes we do earneſtly exhort them to apply themſelves to the Miniſter as to their Spiritual Phyſician with whom they ought freely to conſult and to lay open their caſe to him, ſo far as is neceſſary in order to their eaſe and cure. For by this means he is better able to give them particular directions for the overcoming of thoſe temptations and corruptions which they are moſt afflicted with. He may alſo upon the hearing of their caſe, give them his judgment concerning the ſtate of their ſouls, which may be of great uſe to ſuch whoſe weakneſs or melancholy may cauſe them to think much worſe of themſelves than they deſerve. Moreover upon their ſerious credible profeſſion of repentance, the Miniſter according to the power he has received from God, may, as I have ſaid, declare and pronounce to them the abſolution and remiſſion of their ſins; which may yield much eaſe to the penitent, conſidering the authority as well as the judgment and faithfulneſs of the Miniſter. For which reaſon in the Exhortation before the Communion, there is advice given to ſuch as cannot by their own private endeavours quiet their conſciences, that they would come to their Miniſters for aſſiſtance. But for thoſe who can well do it, we lay no neceſſity upon them to

make such application; much less do we oblige them to make a particular confession of their faults, since God by his Gospel, as a kind of instrument, pardons the truly penitent, though this pardon be not always pronounced by the Priest to that particular person who seeks for the same.

L. *Some argue confession to the Priest to be a duty from the peoples confessing their sins to St.* John Baptist, *when they came to be baptized of him.*

T. This is very little to the purpose, since it was rather a publick than private confession which the people then made, and that in order to their receiving of Baptism from St. *John*, whereby they were in a solemn manner devoted to newness of life, and therefore very requisite it was that they should now acknowledg and renounce their former evil courses, as we would expect the same from a *Turk* or *Jew* before we admit him to Christian Baptism. But doth it thence follow, that all Christian people must confess all the faults they can remember to the Priest, that he may absolve them from the same, before they come to the Communion?

L. *Not in the least so far as I can judg: St.* Paul *only says,* Let a man examine himself and so let him eat, &c. *not enjoyning him to go to confession to a Priest also. But before we leave this pray will you satisfie me a little further about the Priests absolving of men, or forgiving their sins, which I hear Papists talk much of, and commonly they make use of the Text before mention'd,* Joh. 20. 23. *and seem to boast of this as a priviledg peculiar to their Priests.*

T. Very forward they are to boast of priviledges for which they have no warrant. But as to the present case, that which is granted to the Ministers of Christ, whether from that or any the like Text, seems plainly

plainly to be this, That whilſt in their publick preaching, or in Church-cenſures, or other private application to particular perſons, they proceed according to the rules of the Goſpel, their ſentence ſhall be ratified and made good in Heaven, as I have before in part explained to you, and ſhall not grudge to do it again. When the Miniſters of the Goſpel in publiſhing of it do denounce and threaten eternal miſery to Infidels and impenitent ſinners, and do promiſe pardon and ſalvation to penitent believers, this their ſentence ſhall be confirmed in Heaven by Chriſt himſelf; for according to this rule will he proceed at the laſt day. Or when in the exerciſe of Diſcipline, they caſt out the ſtubborn offender, whilſt he remains ſuch, he is alſo out of the Divine Favour: but as upon his profeſſion of repentance, the Miniſter abſolves him, and receives him into the boſom of the Church; ſo if he be ſincere in this profeſſion, God becomes reconciled to him, and receives him again into favour. Thus alſo when any man that is burdened in Conſcience (tho, he lye not under the cenſures of the Church) ſhall apply himſelf to the Miniſter, and open his caſe to him, acquainting him, ſo far as is needful, with thoſe particular crimes that lye moſt heavy upon him, and doth profeſs himſelf ſincerely penitent for the ſame, the Miniſter then may (on condition of his ſincerity) in the name of God pronounce to him the pardon and forgiveneſs of them. So that the Miniſters power of binding and looſing conſiſts chiefly in this, that he with authority as a Miniſter of Chriſt, declares and pronounces pardon to ſome, and threatens wrath to others, as the Goſpel directs and warrants him; and accordingly ſome he ſhuts out of the Church, ſome he receives into it, either by Baptiſm or by abſolution from Church-cen-

sures, and whilst Ministers keep to their rule in these cases, what they bind or loose on earth, shall be bound or loosed in Heaven. And thus they can only forgive sins, by pronouncing forgiveness from God on condition of mens true repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus, which condition is commonly expresst and always understood in their granting absolution to the penitent. This much is own'd and daily practised in our Church, but to more than this we pretend not. If Popish Priests claim more, let them make good their claim as they are able, by Gods holy word they cannot do it, nor by any solid and good reason. Nay some of their own Writers seem to challenge no more than what I have allow'd: for they say that the Priests under the Gospel pardon sin, as those under the Law cleansed men from Leprosie; and how was that, but by pronouncing him to be clean, who upon tryal was found so, according to the rules in that case laid down in the Laws? But if the Priest mistook in his judgment, this would not make the Leper clean, though it might give him liberty to go into the Congregation: so when an hypocrite is absolved, though this may give him liberty of external Communion with the Church, yet will it not be of any value to procure the Favour of God, and the forgiveness of his sins. For pray consider what is it to have our sins forgiven, but to be freed from the punishment due to them? Now who is it that can keep off this punishment, but God alone, who has power to inflict it? Most certainly no mortal man, be he Priest or Pope, or what he will, can save an impenitent sinner from the wrath of God. 'Tis God alone then that properly forgives the penitent, in removing his displeasure from him, and preventing that punishment which was due to him: and Gods Ministers they only pronounce abso-

abſolution and remiſſion to the penitent. Indeed ſo far as the Church inflicted puniſhment, ſo far ſhe may be ſaid to forgive a man by taking off that puniſhment. So the Criminal that was under Excommunication may be abſolved by the Miniſter from that cenſure; but 'tis God alone who gives pardon of ſin by ſaving men from that miſery which they had deſerved; and this pardon his Miniſters do in his name pronounce to the penitent, and can aſſure it only to thoſe who are truly ſo.

L. *I am ſatisfied with your Diſcourſe, and the rather for that I hereby perceive, that whatever real advantage is to be had by the peoples private application to their Spiritual Guide for direction and comfort, this they may have from the Miniſters of our own Church.*

T. No doubt but they may, if it be not their own fault: for we do not only allow, but earneſtly invite them to come to us for that purpoſe, and are ready to give them all the aſſiſtance we are capable. And according to that power which Chriſt hath given to his Miniſters, to pronounce abſolution to thoſe that are penitent, we are ready to do the ſame both in publick and private, for the ſatisfaction and comfort of the pious and humble, whoſe conſciences are burdened with the ſenſe of their ſins.

L. *I was the more willing to have you inſiſt on this, becauſe I have heard ſome Papiſts much exclaiming againſt our Church for not having confeſſion uſed amongſt us, and boaſting what great advantage they received from it.*

T. Where the Prieſt is judicious and faithful, and the people truly devout, I doubt not but they may get much benefit by a free opening of their minds to him, and receiving ſuch directions as may be ſuitable to their particular caſe. And may true piety be promoted, whether in this place or that, by this or the

other method, for my part, I shall rejoyce in it. And perhaps the abuse of private confessions in the Church of *Rome*, may have driven others into the contrary extreme, and made them too much disused amongst us. But in the mean time it's most unreasonable to rack and torture mens consciences, by obliging them to tell every particular fault they can think of; which instead of giving ease, may often occasion more perplexity and disquiet to their minds, on more accounts than one. Besides, whatever they boast, I doubt this practice is generally turned into a meer formality, and by the carelesness both of Priest and people (though I will not condemn all) tends rather to encourage and harden men in sin, than to reform them from it, whilst they conceit they have a pardon so near at hand, and can upon easie terms wipe off their former guilt, and so go on to sin upon a new score. This while I doubt they come to confession for a pardon, rather than a cure, and are pleased with it as a fine device to keep them from Hell, tho they go on in their sins. Especially considering that current doctrine of their Church before mention'd, that bare attrition (that is, being sorry for sin only from fear of Hell) may suffice to procure pardon, if they are but absolved by the Priest. And may not the most wicked man on earth sometimes feel this kind of sorrow, whilst yet he has no real love for God and goodness? Moreover, notwithstanding their great pretences of Religion, and the good of souls, there is, I fear, a great deal of carnal policy in their urging this Auricular confession (as they call it) upon the people with so much strictness; for the Priest by this means knowing so much the secrets of their minds, and their private faults, it gives him more dominion over them, and makes them have more awe and reverence for him. And whilst

they

they often discover the secrets of Families, of Statesmen and persons of greatest quality, they know how to make their advantage of these discoveries, for their own interest, as occasion shall serve. Other abuses also there may be, and I doubt often are made of this custom by the worser sort of men, such as I am not willing to mention. Rather let us proceed with your Author.

CHAP. XI.

Of Invocation of Saints.

L. *IN the next place he pleads for praying to Saints, which he reckons we may as lawfully do, as St.* Paul *when living desired others to pray for him, as he also did for them: and so he supposes that both Angels and Saints do pray for us in Heaven, and therefore we may pray to them to do it for us.*

T. By this he would insinuate that our Prayers to them are only to desire them to pray to God for us, which is not so, as we shall shew anon. But for the present, let us suppose this to be all they argue for, that we are to pray to the Saints departed, that they would intercede with God for us. Now for this we have no warrant from the holy Scripture, no such precept either in the Old Testament or the New, nor yet the example of any pious person recorded in either. Nor was it the practice of the Primitive Church for some hundred years after our Saviour, and therefore surely we are very excusable for refusing to comply with so bold an innovation. The argument he makes use of is far from the purpose. For does it follow that

because

because I may desire any good man now living to pray for me, that therefore I may desire those that are dead and in another world to do it? Surely no. Especially if you consider how much danger, at least, there is of Idolatry in this custom of praying to the Saints departed. For these prayers to them are offered up in a solemn manner, when people are upon their knees, and with all the signs of devotion and reverence which they use in the worship of Almighty God, and commonly they are mingled with their prayers to God. What wonder then if ignorant people by this means be drawn to worship Saints with the same devotion that they do God himself? but there's no such danger in my desiring the prayers of some living Friend to whom I am speaking or writing. Besides, I know that my Friend hears what I say, and will grant my desire; but I have no manner of assurance that, the Saints in Heaven hear or know the requests which I make to them. Nay, we may be sure that they being finite creatures, are not present every where, nor can attend to Thousands of Supplicants in several parts of the World, who may all be making their addresses to them at the same time.

L. *But he says, that they now seeing God, do see as in a clear Looking-glass whatever touches him.*

T. This is boldly said, but without the least proof, and therefore needs no confutation. Yea, certainly it is most false, since the Angels who behold the face of God, are yet ignorant of many things which it does not please God to reveal to them. And by the way, this is directly contrary to the general opinion of the Ancients, which was, that the souls of good men did not attain the blissful sight of God till after the Resurrection, and therefore they made mention of the holiest and best Men in their Prayers, that they

they might have a joyful Reſurrection, and that this glorious day might be haſtned for their comfort, as we have ſhewed. Now thus to pray for them, does not ſeem very conſiſtent with their praying to them at the ſame time: Nor is there any evidence of ſuch Prayers uſed amongſt them. Only this is generally granted, that ſome of the Fathers, about Three or Four hundred years after our Saviour's time, in Funeral Orations or Speeches made to the honour of deceaſed Saints and Martyrs, were wont ſometimes, in a Rhetorical manner, to make Apoſtrophes to the dead, turning their Speech to them, as is common with Orators, even to things inanimate, as to the Heavens, the Earth, or the like. But it does not appear that even theſe Fathers themſelves were fully perſwaded that the Souls of their Friends heard theſe diſcourſes; nor did they uſe to make ſolemn Addreſſes to them in the ſame poſture, and at the ſame time that they made their Prayers to God: Much leſs was it the cuſtom of the Church in thoſe days ſo to do, though perhaps ſuch forms of ſpeaking, uſed by eminent Men, might prove ſome occaſion of it in after-times.

L. *But he adds that the Angel in* Zachary, *Cap.* 1. *pray'd for the People of* Iſrael; *and* Jeremy *the Prophet after he was dead did the ſame, for which he quotes* 2 Mac. 15.

T. There can be little force in arguments drawn from appearances of things to Prophets in viſions: and much leſs from that ſtory of *Judas*'s dream in the 15*th.* of *Maccab.* it being very uncertain by the relation there given, whether he had ſuch a dream, or whether he did not deviſe it for the incouragement of the People. But be it true or falſe, it's of very little conſequence, ſince neither from theſe or any other places

places doth it appear, after what manner either Angels or Saints do pray for those here on Earth. For though particular Angels have knowledge of those particular Persons and Nations about whom, by God's appointment, they are employ'd; yet is it no way probable, that any one Angel has knowledge of all persons in all places: And much less can we think that any Saint has such a vast and infinite understanding: Nay, we have no assurance that they are acquainted with us and our affairs. The words of the Prophet seem to teach the contrary, *Isa.* 63. 16. But let us take all for granted that he asserts about Angels and Saints praying for those on Earth, yet does this make little for his purpose, since their praying for us, does not depend upon our Praying to them so to do; nor shall we have the less benefit from any Prayers they may put up for mankind, because out of Honour to God, we dare put up none to them, if in the mean time we do constantly and devoutly worship Almighty God, with an humble dependance on the intercession of our Blessed Saviour, who, we are sure, *lives for ever to appear in the presence of God for us.*

L. *Yes, he says Christ is the principal advocate; but yet he will not take it ill that we do Honour to his Saints for his sake, no more than the King's Son will be displeased with the People, for Honouring those who are his and his Fathers Favourites.*

T. Our Lord will not be displeased with us for giving to his Saints that Honour which is due to them, which is, that we honour their Memory, bless God for them, and above all, that we follow their good examples; but it must needs be displeasing to him for us to give them any part of that Honour which is due to himself, the only Mediator betwixt God and man, as we are plainly taught, 1. *Tim.* 2. 5.

L. *It's*

L. *It's true, they ſay, there is only one Mediator of Redemption, but there are more for Interceſſion,* viz. *Angels and Saints.*

T. This diſtinction is purely of their own coining, without any ground from Holy Scripture, and therefore juſtly to be rejected. Nor yet do they keep true to this, when they talk of Saints meriting, not only for themſelves, but for others, which is to make them in ſome meaſure Mediators of Redemption. But to our purpoſe: whatever Prayers either Saints or Angels may put up for us, we have no warrant from God to put up any to them; nor are we allowed to make uſe of any other Mediator but Jeſus Chriſt alone, by whom our perſons and ſervices are recommended to Gods acceptance.

L. *But they commonly plead that we may fitly make uſe of Angels and Saints to preſent our Prayers to God, as when we have a Petition to the King, we deſire ſome of his Courtiers to preſent it for us; and this they ſay ſhews more humility.*

T. There may be a ſhow of humility in the worſhipping of Angels, *Col.* 2. 18, 23. but this does not make it lawful, ſince there is not in it that true humility which is beſt expreſt by Obedience: For God requires no ſuch thing at our hands, nor hath given us allowance for it. And Obedience is better than Sacrifice, better than ſuch *voluntary humility and Will-worſhip.* Neither doth the compariſon he brings, fit the preſent Caſe: For it's a difficult thing for mean men to have acceſs to Princes, and therefore they are glad of the aſſiſtance of Courtiers to preſent their Petitions; but the God whom we ſerve is moſt eaſie of acceſs, always near at hand, a preſent help in trouble, moſt infinitely merciful and gracious, ready to hear and receive the humble Petitions of the meaneſt of his Ser-

Servants, who come to him in the name of his Son Jesus, our only Mediator and Advocate, who will effectually intercede for all devout supplicants. And a great dishonour it is to him to joyn other Mediators with him, as if he wanted their Assistance. For thus in a Kings Court, if it was made the peculiar priviledge of the Son to deliver all Petitions to his Father, he might justly look on it as a neglect, yea, as an affront, for any man to employ some Courtier for that purpose. And in our Case it's very unreasonable, since we are fully assured that our blessed Saviour knows our wants and desires, and is both able and willing to assist us; but (as I have said) we have no such assurance, that this or that Saint hath any knowledge of us and our affairs, or can afford us help and relief.

L. *I see no manner of reason why we should make use of any other Mediators beside the Lord Jesus, who alone is* able to save to the uttermost, all that come to God by him.

T. But beside all this, however they pretend that they only pray to Saints to pray to God for them, it is most evident that they do make some such Addresses to Saints, especially to the blessed Virgin, as do import much more, even such as are proper only to be used to Almighty God himself. For instance, they devote themselves to her Service and Honour, resign themselves to her Will and Pleasure, commend themselves and their affairs to her protection and guidance, make Vows to her in their distress, offer thanks and praise to her for their deliverance, beg her assistance in all difficulties and dangers, particularly at their last hour. All this, with much more to the same purpose, frequently used in their devotions to her, speaks somewhat more surely, than to desire her barely to intercede

cede for them. Yea, thoſe expreſſions which may be thus interpreted, are yet delivered in ſuch a manner, without any mention of her interceding, that what ever notion the more knowing and learned may have, yet moſt likely it is, that common People take the words as they ſound, and ſeek aſſiſtance from her, as they do from Almighty God and our Saviour And no wonder, when their ſupplications are made to her as to the Queen of Heaven, their Lady and Governeſs, one who hath a mighty Power in Heaven and Earth, and is the very Mother of Mercy and Pity. What does all this ſerve for, but to make her a kind of Goddeſs, one inveſted with Divine Power and Glory? This is done eſpecially in that they call our Ladies *Pſalter*, wherein is applied to her, all, or moſt of that which is aſcribed to God himſelf in the Book of *Pſalms*. Nay, as is yet to be ſeen in ſome of their old Miſſals, they give her ſtill the power of a Mother over her Son in Heaven, and deſire her to command him to do this and that by vertue of that her power, which one of their Writers excuſes as a kind of Religious dalliance; but others more modeſt and ingenuous have found fault with theſe things, and acknowledge they ought to be reformed; yea, they have plainly expreſſed their fears, that the common people amongſt them do worſhip Saints and Angels in much-what the ſame manner as the Heathens of old did their Dæmons and Heroes, and inferiour Deities, having particular Saints for particular caſes and turns, as the Heathens had their ſeveral Deities for ſeveral places and purpoſes. Nor is it any wonder if the poor people give that worſhip to theſe which is due to God alone, when their Learned men make ſuch nice diſtinctions betwixt them as are not eaſy to be underſtood or remembred; whilſt they talk of Worſhip ſuperiour

our and inferiour, relative, subordinate, and the like. To God, they grant, belongs the highest sort of Worship, which they call *Latria*: then to Angels and Saints they allow a lower kind, which they call *Dulia*; and to the Blessed Virgin *Mary* somewhat betwixt both, which they call *Hyperdulia*, which they say, is but little below what is to be given to God himself. Now, what subtil Doctor of them all can fix the just bounds and terms betwixt these? Or if he could, yet how easie is it for the People to mistake and transgress those bounds, giving perhaps to a common Saint, what is due to the Blessed Virgin? and to her, what belongs to God alone? At best then the People are in great danger of Idolatry, and utterly inexcusable are their Leaders, who betray them into this danger.

L. *And yet my Author very severely inveighs against us Protestants, as having no good and sound belief, because we pay not due honour and reverence to the Saints, especially for that we will not pray to the Virgin-Mother, whose authority, he says, doubtless must needs be very great.*

T. But in the mean time, what good authority has he for that which he asserts with so much confidence? The Holy Scripture is utterly silent in this matter, and so are the most Ancient Writers in the Christian Church. They speak not one word of her Authority in Heaven, nor of any Worship to be given her by those on Earth. Nay, when this Superstition began first to creep in amongst some silly Women, one of those Writers, about Four hundred years after our Saviour, declaims against it, and utterly disallows it. Judge therefore what a wise and charitable censure this is, that we *Protestants* have no good belief, because forsooth we do not pray to the Blessed Virgin. What! is our Belief not good, because it is not strong enough to give credit to all the idle, ridiculous stories

which

which their fabulous Legends tell of her or any other Saint? This, it's confeſt, we cannot do, but yet we readily believe all that the Holy Scriptures, or any good and credible Authors relate. And what a malicious ſlander is it, that we give her no Honour? Since, though we do not worſhip her as a Goddeſs, or the Queen of Heaven, and the Mother of Mercy, yet we give her all that honour, which either God's Word requires, or the Ancient Chriſtians gave. According to her own prediction, and the Language of the Angel, we do moſt juſtly ſtile her *Bleſſed among Women.* Her name is precious and honourable, and her memory ſacred among us. We bleſs God for the Graces he beſtowed on her, and moſt gratefully commemorate his Mercy to her, in advancing her to that ſingular honour of being the Virgin Mother of the ever-bleſſed Jeſus, the Son of God, and Saviour of mankind. Yet all this while according to her own example, *Our ſouls do magnify the Lord, and our ſpirit rejoyceth in God our Saviour.* And to do otherwiſe, to give Divine Honour to any creature, were to correct the *Magnificat* (as we uſe to ſpeak) yea, directly to contradict it. Nay, may I not add, that ſuch worſhippers do offer the higheſt affront and diſhonour to the Bleſſed Virgin, whilſt they imagine ſhe can be well pleaſed with their Adorations and Prayers, and with ſuch fulſom flatteries and praiſes as their Devotions to her are commonly ſtuffed with? As if now in Heaven ſhe had loſt all that humility, which when on Earth made her ſo eſteemed of God and men. Certainly if we can gueſs any thing of the temper of Saints in Glory, by what they were here in the World, ſuch Worſhip and Invocation muſt needs be very diſpleaſing to them, if they have any knowledge of what's done here below. What haſte did St. *Peter* make to rectify *Cornelius*'s miſtake,

when he fell down at his feet? He presently bade him stand up, telling him that he himself was a Man. So St. *Paul* and St. *Barnabas*, when the People took them for Gods, and would have worshipped them accordingly, they rent their clothes for indignation, and utterly forbad them, calling out to them to worship the true and living God; as the Angel also did to St. *John*, saying to him, *I am thy fellow servant, worship God*, Rev. 22. 8, 9. And doubtless they are still as zealously concerned for the honour of God as ever they were, and can take no pleasure in having his Prerogative any way encroacht upon for their sakes. Nor therefore can they be displeased with us for not offering up our prayers or praises to them, out of a just and pious fear of robbing God and Christ of their due, by giving their Glory to another. Displeased, I say, they cannot be, whilst we do herein follow their directions, and imitate their example, in worshipping God alone through Christ the Mediator. For this was their practice when on Earth, and this is still their employment in Heaven; and this we find required in almost a Thousand places in those Holy Books which the Spirit of God enabled them to write for the guidance of his Church in all following Ages. There we find our Blessed Saviour himself teaching us to pray to *Our Father which is in Heaven*, but not a syllable of making any Prayers to his Mother. And would he omit any thing that was needful? So the Apostles direct us to pray to God continually, and in every thing to give him thanks, doing all in the name of Jesus Christ; but not one word said of praying to Angel or Saint upon any account whatever. Nor do they, that I remember, in all their Writings, make the least mention of the Blessed Virgin *Mary* after our Saviour's Ascension, except in the first of the *Acts*; where

where it's only ſaid that ſhe was together with the reſt of the Diſciples. Not one ſhort prayer do we find any where put up to her; no injunction given to any Chriſtian Church, in the Epiſtles ſent to them, concerning their Worſhip and Adoration of her, no nor in any Chriſtian Writer for ſome ages after. Whereas we now find the Popiſh Books of Devotion full of ſuch nauſeous ſtuff. Yet theſe are the men who cry up Antiquity, and pretend to keep ſo cloſe to Apoſtolical Tradition, and tell us that their Church holds nothing but what this age took from the laſt, and that from the other before it, till at length you come to the Apoſtles themſelves; but the preſent inſtance, with many others of like nature, ſufficiently ſhews the vanity and falſhood of this pretence.

L. *To my apprehenſion it plainly does, and I am apt to think another inſtance to that purpoſe may be given in what my Author next mentions,* viz. *concerning Images,* &c.

CHAP. XII.

Of the Worſhip of Images.

T. PRAY what ſays he concerning Images?

L. *He ſays that the Images and Reliques of Saints are honourable in regard of the Saints to whom they have relation, and in regard of God himſelf, ſince he makes uſe of them for inſtruments of his miracles. And he brings in his Scholar telling how it vext him to the heart to hear any ſpeak ill of the Images of Chriſt crucified.*

T. Much rather may it grieve the heart of any good Chriſtian to conſider how by the abuſe of theſe Images, the great God and our Bleſſed Saviour are

highly dishonoured. Though your Author is so cunning as to say nothing of any Pictures of God, yet such there are among them, and of the Sacred Trinity, and this vindicated by some of their ablest Writers, though most directly contrary to Gods express command by *Moses* and the Prophets, as we find *Deut.* 4. 15, 16. *Isa.* 40. 18. The reason of which commands does still remain as forcible as ever, and will do so to the end of the world. Since it then was, and ever will be an infinite disparagement and lessening to the glory of Gods incomprehensible Majesty, to go about to make any picture or resemblance of him: insomuch that some of the wiser Heathens have declared against it. As to the Images he mentions, *viz.* of Saints, together with their Reliques, it's a fine smooth word he uses when he says they are honourable: if by this he meant no more than such an honour or respect as we use in civility to give to the picture of a friend, or to somewhat he has left us in remembrance, we should comply with him, supposing these to be truly the Pictures and Reliques of those Saints whose names they bear, yea whether true or false we should not much dispute it. But it's plain by the arguments they use, and by the practice of their Church, that it is a Religious, and not meerly a civil honour, which they plead for and give to Images, even such an honour as God himself in his Holy Word hath expressly forbid.

L. *It seems so indeed: for though he makes use of the comparison which you have now mention'd, yet his other arguments do aim at much more. For he urges the example of* Moses *putting off his shooes when God appear'd to him, because the ground was holy*, Exod. 3. *And he quotes the words of the* Psalmist (*as he renders them*) That they should worship the Ark, *which is called* Gods foot-stool, *Psal.* 99. 5.

T. This

7. This plainly ſhews what that honour is which they would have done to Images, and it ſhews alſo that their cauſe is very weak and bad, which has no better arguments to ſupport it. What, becauſe *Moſes* at Gods command put off his ſhooes in that place which was made holy for the time by Gods glorious appearance there, muſt we therefore againſt Gods expreſs command bow down to Images, in which there is no holineſs, nor any evidence of the Divine preſence? Or are they of the old Heatheniſh opinion, that by conſecration of an Image there is ſome Divine virtue convey'd to it, that the Deity takes up his reſidence there, and does thence beſtow favours upon his worſhippers. This one would think by their practice, as I ſhall after ſhew. As to the *Pſalmiſts* words, they command us not to *worſhip the Ark* (as he falſly reads it) but *at* or *before* the Ark: *Exalt the Lord our God, and worſhip at his footſtool*, that is, worſhip God at or before the Ark, where in a more peculiar manner he manifeſted himſelf. And dare they aſcribe this to their Images? So *v.* 9. of that Pſalm, *Worſhip at his holy hill*; and ſo are theſe places rendred by ſome Commentators of their own Church. You ſee then what they plead for, *viz.* a worſhip of the Images themſelves with religious worſhip: for this it is that the arguments they make uſe of tend to, if they are of any force. But the practice of their Church is the beſt interpreter of their judgment, and ſhews what they mean by that due honour, which (according to the Council of *Trent*) is to be given to Images. Now their common cuſtom is (according to the account generally given, and which I find not any of themſelves to deny); their cuſtom, I ſay, is with great ſolemnity to conſecrate their Images, to ſet them up in their Churches, to deck and adorn them with all manner of

pomp and bravery; they set up Wax lights, and burn Incense before them; yea with all outward appearance of devotion they bow to them, kneel down before them, and fasten their eyes upon them when they offer up their prayers. Sometimes they carry them about in publick procession; and many take pains to go long Pilgrimages to them, some to this Saint, some to that: and more especially to the Images of the Blessed Virgin in divers places, as to the Lady of *Loretto* in *Italy*, and here of old in *England* to the Lady of *Walsingham*, and the Lady of *Wilsden*, that is to her Image set up in such and such places. Hither they came oft for Cures and for help in their distresses, and here they presented their offerings. Which seems plainly to shew that at least the common people were of opinion that some Divine power resided in these Images, and a greater measure of it in some than in others, whilst some were much more frequented than others, and ten times more stories told of wondrous miracles wrought by them in one place than another.

L. *My Author talks of Gods using them as instruments for the working of miracles.*

T. Whatever he or others may talk, I do not in the least question but that the stories they tell of that nature are meer forgeries, or else the delusions of evil spirits, who cannot but take great delight in Image-worship, and may be justly permitted by lying wonders to abuse and harden those that are given up to such impiety, according to 2 *Thes.* 2. 9, 10, *&c.* Or lastly, they are often the cheats of cunning covetous Priests, who easily impose upon a superstitious credulous people. Many impostures of this nature have been discovered, yea and bewail'd by the more wise and honest among themselves. Thus they sometimes make their Images sweat and bleed, and squeak and

weep,

weep, with many other tricks of Legerdemain, which one or other commonly finds out, and ſo ſpoils all their game. So ſome travellers have obſerved that there is ſeldom a Prieſt ſo cunning at theſe devices, but there is a *Jew* or ſome ſuch diſaffected perſon, who is as cunning to diſcover and lay open the cheat, to the infinite ſcandal of our profeſſion, hardning thoſe that are already Infidels, and inclining others to become ſo, whilſt theſe notorious impoſtures make them ready to call in queſtion the real miracles wrought by our Bleſſed Saviour and his followers.

L. *This is indeed a great diſhonour to our Religion: but they commonly urge the miracles done of old as an argument for the truth of thoſe now pretended to be done amongſt them; eſpecially they tell of miracles wrought at the Tombs of Saints and Martyrs in former times, and the ſame they ſay are ſtill done by their Reliques which they have in keeping.*

T. This we ſhall be drawn to believe, when we can ſee them done above board in the open day, where it ſhall be free for all people to behold and examine the ſame: but till then, I ſay, we ſhall look upon their fine ſtories as meer cheats or forgeries. And among all the pious, or rather impious frauds uſed in their Church, there are ſcarce any more groſs or more common than in the matter of Reliques. For inſtance, at this day they pretend to ſhew ſome of the wood of the Croſs on which our Saviour ſuffered, which ſome of their famous Authors define ought to be worſhipped with the higheſt ſort of Divine Worſhip, becauſe it touch'd Chriſts body. And ſuch quantities of this wood they have heretofore pretended to ſhow in ſeveral places, that were they all put together, it's thought, they would make a burden (to ſpeak modeſtly) by much too heavy for any one man to beat. They are

also said to retain some of the Blessed Virgins milk; though by what art it's preserved you must not enquire. Yea some of the Tail of the Ass on which our Saviour rode to *Jerusalem*, with a world more of such ridiculous fopperies, that he must be even as stupid and dull as that very brute, who can believe the same. Several of their Churches lay claim to the body of the same Saint, each endeavouring to render themselves more famous than others, by pretending to more honourable Reliques, and bragging of greater wonders wrought by them, the better to draw on customers for the encrease of their gain. Yet sometimes after all these pretences, it hath been discovered, that the bones of a Malefactor have been made use of instead of a Saint or Martyr.

L. *But have there not been true miracles anciently wrought at the Martyrs Tombs?*

T. No doubt but there have: for in those days God might please to do it for the conviction of Pagans, and for the confirmation of that faith which his holy Martyrs had sealed with their blood. Yet even then neither these Saints nor their Reliques were to have Religious Worship given them, but God alone was to be praised and honoured for them. When the dead man was raised by the touching of *Elisha*'s bones, 2 *Kings* 13. to the God of *Elisha* was the praise only due, but neither the Prophet himself nor his bones were to be worshipped. And should any *Jew* have done it, he would have been look'd upon as guilty of Idolatry, though he had continued to worship the true God, and had pretended that this his worship of the Prophet, or his Image, or his Bones, had been intended for the honour of God. This would no doubt have been look'd on as ill as the peoples Idolizing the brazen Image of the Serpent which *Hezekiah* therefore broke

broke in pieces. He did not think it for Gods Honour to have ſuch an evil practice allow'd: for God is beſt honoured by ways of his own appointment, not thoſe of our deviſing, contrary to his commands. *Obedience is better than Sacrifice*; obedience to the true God is certainly better than Sacrifice to an Idol, or bowing down to an Image, which is one ſort of Idolatry.

L. *But my Author thinks it a moſt unjuſt thing to charge them with Idolatry, whilſt they do not make Gods of their Saints or their Images, but do own and worſhip the true God, not ſetting up Idols in oppoſition to him.*

T. I know they uſe a world of art in this matter, and a thouſand nice diſtinctions, ſubtil evaſions, and ſmooth pretences they have at hand; but after all, if that worſhip of Images which is forbidden in the ſecond Commandment, be properly ſtiled Idolatry, then in this reſpect doth their Church appear notoriouſly guilty of it.

L. *But do they not uſe to ſay that the ſecond Commandment forbids the having of Idols, that is of Idol-Gods, but not the worſhip of Images in honour of the true God?*

T. At this rate they commonly talk, but without any ſolid reaſon, ſince the firſt Commandment forbids our having any falſe Gods or Idols, but then the ſecond Commandment moſt plainly forbids the making of Images for Religious Worſhip, yea though men ſhould pretend that they thereby deſign to worſhip the true and living God; for he is by no means pleaſed with ſuch worſhip, nor will accept of it, but regards it as an affront and diſhonour done to his Divine Majeſty. So that we may boldly ſay, had any *Jew* of old been found guilty of giving ſo much Religious worſhip to Images as the Papiſts generally do at this day, though he ſhould have made the very ſame pretences and excuſes which they do, yet would he have been judged guilty of that Idolatry which is forbidden

in

in the second Commandment, and accordingly would have been proceeded against by such Godly Rulers as were zealous for the true honour of God, and the purity of his Worship, such as *Hezekiah* and others. And to enlarge a little on this subject, this as many learned men have shewn, was plainly the case of the *Israelites* in their worship of the Golden Calf, which *Aaron* made in *Moses*'s absence, *Exod.* 32. 4. For it's very unreasonable to think that they took this Image it self for the God which brought them out of *Egypt*, but rather they made it for a representation of him, having probably learnt from the Idolatrous *Egyptians* to make Images of this fashion for Divine worship; yea *v.* 5. it's expressly said they proclaim'd a Feast to the Lord, designing therefore to worship the true God by this Image. And of this nature was the Idolatry of *Jeroboam*, who made *Israel* to sin, of which we read 1 *Kings* 12. 28. for we find him not accused of drawing away the people from the worship of the true God, but he set up the worship of Images contrary to Gods express command. Now this was a different thing from the worship of Idol Gods, as of *Baal* and other Heathen Deities, which we find some of the Kings of *Israel* accused of, as *Ahab* particularly, 1 *Kin.* 16. 30, 31, *&c.* where it's said of him, *That as if it had been a light thing to walk in the sins of Jeroboam, he also went and served Baal, and worshipped him.* Where you have plainly a distinction made betwixt the sin of *Jeroboam*, and this of *Ahab* in serving *Baal*. So we shall after find of *Jehu*, who was employed to punish *Ahab*'s house for this gross Idolatry, and was himself so zealous against it, that he slew a multitude of *Baal*'s Priests, broke down the Image and the house of *Baal*, and thereupon is said to destroy *Baal* out of *Israel*; yet was he, notwithstanding all this, guilty of continuing

nuing in *Jeroboams*'s ſin, and went after the Golden Calves in *Dan* and *Bethel*, as we read 2 *Kin* 10.28,29. Now can it with any ſhew of reaſon be imagined, that he ſhould worſhip theſe Calves as Idol-gods, in oppoſition to the true God, who had himſelf at Gods command been ſo induſtrious for the rooting out that ſort of Idolatry? No ſurely, but his crime was that he kept up an unlawful way of worſhipping the true God by theſe Golden Calves which *Jeroboam* had ſet up, contrary to the ſecond Commandment, which plainly forbids the giving of any Divine Worſhip to Images. And they who were guilty of this Image-worſhip were alſo accounted and called Idolaters, as we find it aſſerted of the People that worſhipped the Golden Calf which *Aaron* made, 1 Cor. 10.7. *Neither be ye Idolaters as were ſome of them, as it is written, The people eat and drank, and roſe up to play*, which you find ſaid of them at their Idolatrous Feſtival, *Exod.* 32.6. And their caſe ſeems the very ſame who were followers of *Jeroboam*. So that it's poſſible for men to be guilty of ſome ſort of Idolatry, even whilſt they retain the worſhip of the true God, and do not ſet up Idol-gods in oppoſition to him, even by corrupting his worſhip with the uſe of Images which he has ſtrictly forbidden. Thus it ſometimes was with the *Jews* of old, and thus it ſeems to be at this day with the Papiſts. And as ſuch Image-worſhip was accounted Idolatry by the Prophets and holy men of old, ſo it was by the Apoſtles and Primitive Chriſtians, who utterly abhorr'd the uſe of Images in the worſhip of God. Yea to ſuch miſerable ſhifts are Learned Men of the Church of *Rome* put for the vindicating of this practice, that they are greatly divided among themſelves, and take ſeveral ways to do it, each party charging the other with Idolatry in the way they take; for ſome of them

ſay

say that the Image is to be worshipp'd with the very same worship which is due to the object that it represents, whether it be *Latria*, *Dulia*, &c. (according to the trifling distinction before mentioned) for say they, the Image and the object represented by it are as it were joined together, so that one and the same act of worship is given to both, which passes through the Image to the Object; whereas to give any worship to the Image it self (say these men) would be Idolatry. But others say there is an inferior sort of worship due to the Image it self on account of the relation it hath to the object which it represents, and this only may be given to it; but to give the same worship to the Image which belongs to the object, they say, is Idolatrous. But I should soon puzzle and tire both you and my self, should I go about to present you with all the fine and subtil distinctions, which both parties use for their own vindication in this controversie; talking of worship proper and improper, direct and reductive, real and relative, by it self and by accident, *&c.* each accusing the other that they coin distinctions which themselves do not well understand, and surely the same may justly be said of them all. Much more may it be said of the common people, who are this while in a very sad condition, even in most evident danger of Idolatry, and that in the judgment of these their own Learned Men, who are themselves intangled in such labyrinths and perplexities as they know not how to deliver themselves from.

L. *Methinks it were much more safe and prudent for them all to follow the plain direction of Gods Holy Word, not to worship or bow down to Images upon any pretence whatever.*

T. This indeed is a safe course, and the only way they can take to secure themselves and their people from

from falling into Idolatry, through ignorance or miſtake, of which at leaſt there is great danger by their own confeſſion on all ſides. But ſo far are they from this, that they endeavour to keep this ſecond Commandment as much as they well can from the peoples knowledg, both by their falſe gloſſes upon it, and by leaving moſt, if not all of it, out of many of their Books of devotion, written in any vulgar Tongue; I ſuppoſe, leſt the Conſciences of the people ſhould take check when they ſee practices ſo directly contrary to the Divine Precept. For the great buſineſs of theſe their Guides ſeems to be not ſo much to lead them into Truth, as to make them follow with eaſe whereever they lead them.

L. *'Tis a wonder why they ſhould thus hazard themſelves and the people, whilſt there appears no plauſible pretence for it, either from Reaſon or Scripture; nor can I ſee any advantage they can hope for, equal to the hazard they run.*

T. Some pretences they have, though very ſlender ones, *viz.* That their Images make for the honour of Chriſt and the Saints, for the inſtruction of common people, and the raiſing of their affections, Pictures being ſtiled Lay-mens Books. But on the contrary, the great God is hereby diſhonoured, and his Commands diſobey'd, and conſequently our Bleſſed Saviour is diſpleaſed, and the Saints themſelves diſgraced and affronted by ſuch perverſe ways of doing them honour: And whilſt the people have their ſenſes perhaps gratified, and their fancies pleaſed with the beholding and worſhipping of rich and beautiful Images, their minds this while are corrupted and debaſed, true ſpiritual devotion is in a manner extinguiſhed, their Conſciences are defiled, and their Souls endangered by ſuch Idolatrous practices.

L. *How*

L. *How great is their crime then, who draw them into these snares?*

T. Great it is indeed beyond Expression. God grant they themselves may in time consider of it, how they shall ever be able to answer it, when the Blood of Souls shall be required at their hands by him who died to save them. And besides the mischief done to those within the Church, how many thousands by this practice of theirs are kept out of it? For both *Turks* and *Jews* look upon those Christians as Idolaters, who are guilty of this Image-worship, and on that account are prejudiced against Christianity it self. Thus do they harden these men in their Infidelity, whilst they defile themselves and those in their Communion with Idolatry.

L. *Yet after all, the* Papists *take it very hainously to be accused of Idolatry; and some amongst our selves think this to be too heavy a charge.*

T. Let them take it as they will, and let others mince the matter as they please, most certainly they are guilty of violating the Second Commandment; and this Violation of it by worshipping of Images, hath, as I have said, been heretofore accounted and called Idolatry both by the Ancient *Jews*, and by the Primitive Christians, who utterly detested the same. And if now a softer name must be devised for it, let any man call it as he pleases; still it must be looked upon as a gross impiety, and a notorious breach of God's Holy Law, which is enough to work an abhorrence of it in the minds of all Good Christians. But I'll enlarge no further on this Subject; rather I shall refer you to the elaborate Discourses of that incomparable Person Dr. *Stillingfleet*, Dean of St. *Pauls*, where you will find it handled to your full satisfaction. Or in the mean time, I would recommend to you the

Homilies

Homilies of our Church concerning the peril of Idolatry, where you will find this Churches opinion of Image-worſhip, *viz.* that it is downright Idolatry; and there you may learn how far the Ancient Chriſtians, in the firſt and pureſt Ages of the Church, were from this corrupt practice; how it was ordained by an ancient Council, that nothing Painted on the Walls ſhould be worſhipped; and how one of the Fathers in great diſpleaſure tore a Vail in a Church in which he found a Picture, fearing it might be an occaſion of worſhipping it, and wrote earneſtly to the Biſhop of the place about it. There alſo you have a large account of the riſe of this practice, in the more corrupt and declining times, about Six or Seven hundred years after our Saviour, and what oppoſition was then made to it by the better ſort of Chriſtians; by what weak Arguments it was defended, by what ill arts in ſome places eſtabliſhed, what bad effects it produced, and how by degrees the people were ſunk into all that groſs Superſtition and Idolatry which had overſpread the *Roman* Church, and particularly this Kingdom at the time of the Reformation This, with much more to the ſame purpoſe, you will there find diſcovered, and will ſee what great reaſon there was for reforming the Church from this, as well as many other corruptions and abuſes wherewith we were overrun.

L. *I ſhall gladly peruſe theſe Homilies when I have opportunity: being already very ſenſible that the worſhip of Images is a moſt dangerous and unlawful Cuſtom, a meer innovation in the Church, and a plain breach of the Second Commandment, and therefore well deſerves to be branded with the infamous name of Idolatry, from which God preſerve me.*

T. So it has been reckoned, and commonly ſtiled by

by our Church, and by those of our Divines who were most instrumental in the Reforming it, and have been most eminent for the defence of it. Good Reason you have therefore stedfastly to resolve against it. But let us now proceed to what remains.

CHAP. XIII.

Of Praying by Beads.

L. *THE next thing my Author attempts to vindicate, is their praying by Beads, which serve to number their Pater Nosters and Ave-Maries; of which, as I perceive by him, Sixty three Ave-Maries and Seven Pater-nosters, and one Creed make a Bead-roll.*

T. Very like, and this number, as I take it, they call our Ladies Crown; and an Hundred and Fifty Ave-Maries, and Fifteen Pater Nosters make a Rosary, of which there is a kind of Order in their Church, called the Confraternity of the Rosary. Into this Society all manner of people may be admitted, and these (as I find in one of their Authors who gives an account of it) are obliged to say over the whole Rosary once in a Week at least. And these Prayers are to be offered up in a certain manner to Almighty God in honour of the blessed Virgin. Now, lest this should be too burdensome, there is provision made, that if they have any lawful impediment, they may get another to say their Prayers for them, and it shall be accepted. They who enter into this Society, must solemnly devote themselves to the Honour, Love and Service of the blessed Virgin: Even as solemnly as a Man can consecrate himself to the Service of Almighty God our Heavenly Father, do they give up themselves

ſelves to her as the Mother of all Chriſtians: For ſo they ſay ſhe is to be eſteemed, becauſe our Saviour ſaid of her to St. *John, Behold, thy Mother.* To each of theſe Votaries is given by the Father who admits him a ſet of Beads, which are Bleſt and Croſt, and Sprinkled with Holy water. And moſt wonderful Privileges are beſtowed by ſundry Popes upon thoſe who devoutly recite this Roſary. They may gain a Plenary Indulgence for themſelves, and may every day releaſe a Soul out of Purgatory, which ſurely they are very uncharitable if they will not do Nay, which ſeems ſtrangeſt of all, even thoſe in Purgatory may be admitted into this fraternity, if any particular Friend of theirs on Earth ſhall deſire it; and will perform on their behalf what is required, and ſo may they ſhare in the merits of the whole Society. Tho' by the way, I wonder that any body ſhould leave a particular Friend in Purgatory, when he may ſo eaſily deliver him thence, as you heard before. But I'le entertain you no longer with this fulſom ridiculous ſtuff. Let us return to your Author, and ſee what he ſays for this manner of Praying, which a Parrot may go near to learn, and uſe it with as much devotion as multitudes of them.

L. *He ſays that the Ave-Mary is uſed ſixty three times, becauſe the Bleſſed Virgin* Mary *lived juſt ſo many years.*

T. A wiſe Reaſon truly! But I wonder where he had ſo good intelligence. Some of her Worſhippers it's like have heard it from her own mouth: For heretofore nothing more common than for her to appear to them, and talk familiarly with them, if we may believe their own Legends, which I confeſs is ſomewhat hard to do. Yet I grant there is as much certainty in the ſtory of her Age, as ſtrength in the Argument taken from it, that is juſt none at all. Why do they not by this Reaſon ſay the Lords Prayer Thirty three times, becauſe our

Saviour lived so many years? And it might also be asked, why but one Lords Prayer for nine Ave Maries: but waving these things, let us hear his pretence for this odd way of Praying, by running over the same words so many times together, as if they would make up with the number what they want in weight and devotion; and then telling them by their Beads, as if they were afraid of being some way cheated if they did not keep so exact a reckoning. Certainly we have neither precept nor example in Scripture to recommend such a way of worship.

L. *All that he says is, that* David *said his Prayers Seven times a day, and our Saviour in the Garden repeated three times the same Prayer. He demands therefore, whether it be ill to say ones Prayers by number when he has reason so to do?*

T. No surely: but when a Man has no reason so to do, it's very vain and absurd. And by all that he alledges, it seems they have no reason, else sure he would have given some. For, I beseech you, where's the consequence, that because *David* pray'd Seven times in a day (that is very often) therefore it's a good thing to repeat one and the same Prayer Seventy times seven in a day, or at least as often as we well can? Or when our Saviour in his Agony doth with great fervour and affection offer up his Petition to his Father thrice in the same words, which were suitable to his present state, is this any thing like the *Papists* way of running over an Ave-Mary, Ten, Twenty, Thirty times together, with a Pater-noster now and then intermixed for variety sake, and this very oft in the midst of company, without the least shew of devotion, and as I take it, in the Latin Tongue, which few of them understand? And which is prettiest of all, when they are busie themselves, though it be but at sports and pastime

paſtimes, they may then get ſome idle body patter over theſe their Prayers for them. And I have heard it often reported by thoſe who have converſed much with them, that ſometimes two of theſe devout people will play a game at Cards which ſhall ſay Prayers for the other at ſuch a time. So that it ſeems they take them for a kind of penance, being glad when they are over, as a School-boy when he has done his Task. And is this like the Devotion of the Holy *Pſalmiſt*, who prayed to God, and praiſed him with all his Heart and Soul, and ſang praiſes with underſtanding, and with great affection and delight? Or much leſs is this like to that of our Bleſſed Saviour, who *in the days of his fleſh offered up Prayers and Supplications with ſtrong cries and tears*, as we have it, *Heb.* 5.7. He continued, indeed, ſometimes whole nights in Prayer; and his holy Apoſtles were very conſtant and frequent in this duty, and have enjoyned us to *pray continually*, and *in every thing to give thanks*. But do you find them any where directing us to ſay over the ſame words ſo often in an hour or a day? and to make uſe of a ſett of Beads to keep true reckoning? Is this a Worſhipping of God in Spirit and in Truth? Is this like the fervent Prayer of the Righteous, which St. *James* tells us is ſo effectual? Is this like the Interceſſion of *Abraham* or *Moſes*, the Wreſtlings of *Jacob*, the earneſt Prayer of *Elias* and other holy men recorded in Scripture? Nay, ſo far is it from being agreeable to ſuch examples, that it ſeems plainly contrary to our Saviours command, *Not to uſe vain repetitions in praying, as if we thought to be heard for our much ſpeaking*, Matth. 6. 7.

L. *So it ſeems truly; and nothing can be more weak and impertinent than what my Author talks of, ſaying Five Pater-noſters in honour of our Saviours Five wounds, he means, I ſuppoſe, thoſe in his hands and feet, and that on*

his side: But what he means by our saying the Lords Prayer in honour to those wounds, I cannot well tell.

T. Nor can I resolve you: He might as well talk of saying it Twelve times in honour of the Twelve Apostles; and then Seventy times for the Seventy Disciples: and after that, as oft as you please in honour of what you have a mind to. For they forsooth have a certain peculiar manner of offering up their Prayers to God in honour to other persons and things, which I confess I am utterly ignorant of; nor do I think they themselves can give a rational account of it. Of such blind devotions as these well may Ignorance be accounted the Mother.

L. *But my Author is by no means pleased that this way of praying by Beads should be thought fit only for Idiots that cannot read: For he says that Kings and their Courts, the Pope and his Cardinals make use of Beads, who can read better than Sectaries.*

T. There may be some question of that for all his confidence, since it's commonly said that the present Pope (tho' much commended for some other good qualities) can scarce read their Latin Service. But let them be able to read never so well, that will hardly prove all good which they do. And if we speak of examples, I must confess I had much rather follow our Saviour and his Apostles than the Pope and his Cardinals.

L. *And so had I too: But he says they have Books of Devotion as well as Beads; that both are good, and variety delighteth.*

T. They had need truly to have some variety to refresh them: For sure they can neither have much delight, nor much profit from a tedious repetition of the same words over and over at the same time, especially whilst some of them understand not what they say, and

and do alſo ſay ſome ſuch things as would not much help their Devotion though they were underſtood.

L. *He ſays there can be no better Prayers than the Pater-noſter, the Ave, and the Creed.*

T. As to the Ave and the Creed, they are no Prayers at all: the former being the Angels Salutation to the Bleſſed Virgin, *Luk.* 1. 28. and it is an abſurd piece of ſuperſtition to turn it into a Prayer, ſuch as never any Chriſtian was guilty of for many hundred years after that Salutation was firſt uttered. The Creed contains a confeſſion of our Faith, and tho, the frequent repetition of it, with ſerious reflections upon it, may be of great uſe, *viz.* for the engaging of us to live according to our profeſſion; yet is it by no means a Prayer, nor any thing like one. The Pater-noſter, or the Lords-Prayer, is indeed a moſt admirable form of Prayer, which may not only ſerve as a pattern to direct us how to pray, but is alſo moſt proper and fit to be frequently uſed as a Prayer, and may very well be joyn'd with any other Prayers which we make to Almighty God. But yet we muſt not think there is any devotion expreſt, or any advantage got, by repeating it over ſo many times in an hour, or a day, as if there were ſome ſecret virtue and force in the bare rehearſal of the words, whilſt we little or nothing attend to the ſenſe of them, which is fitter for Mag-pies and Parrots than for reaſonable creatures, from whom God expects a reaſonable Service, wherein their Hearts and Souls are to be employed as well as their Tongues. But let us proceed.

CHAP. XIV.

Of Diſtinction of Meats.

L. *MY Author next pleads for that diſtinction of Meats which is uſed in their Church, there being ſome*

Meats, which he says, they forbid, not at all times, as those in 1 Tim. 4. 3. *but for certain days, to chastise the flesh, and render it obedient to the spirit: And so the Apostles themselves, he adds, did for some time forbid the eating of blood and strangled Beasts.*

T. This prohibition of the Apostles makes nothing for his purpose, since they are generally supposed to forbid the eating of blood and things strangled, to avoid that offence which it would have given to the *Jews*, which was a sufficient reason whilst it lasted: But now in the Church of *Rome* they do without any reason at all that I can tell of, severely forbid some sorts of Meat in Lent, and at some other times, when yet they allow other Meats every whit as pleasant, as costly and luxurious. And whether this be that which is condemned by the Apostle in that place to *Timothy* or not, yet it is a very unreasonable imposition, and tends to ensnare mens Consciences, and make them fancy there is some Religion in using this sort of food rather than that. Yet mistake me not, what really tends to Piety and Mortification, we do not in the least condemn, no, we commend and require it: But the distinction of Meats made in the Church of *Rome* seems not to have any such tendency. For with them a Man that shall eat plenty of Salmon, Sturgeon, or other such delicious Fish, and drink rich Wines, breaks not his Lent (tho, it's like the stricter sort take not this liberty) but if he chance to eat a little of any course sort of Flesh, or but the Broth it's boil'd in, or any sort of Milk-meats, he is a transgressor. As if there were not a *Flesh of Fish, as well as of Birds and Beasts*, or as if there were any vertue in abstaining from one sort rather than another. When we keep a true Fast, we are that while to abstain from all sorts of Meat, if we are able. In a time of abstinence,

it

it beseems us to eat more sparingly, and to use such a sort of Diet as is most cheap and plain, and tends least to please the Palate, or pamper the flesh, that so we may be in a better temper for Religious Duties, and may have more time for our Devotion, more Money for the Poor, and may both humble our Souls, and afflict and tame our Bodies, and govern our Appetites. For all this there is good reason; such fasting and abstinence administers to Religion. But then, whether in your times of abstinence you eat a little Flesh, or a little Fish; whether with your Fish you eat Butter or Oyl, whether you drink Milk or Small-Beer, and the like, seems not of the least consequence on any Religious account. You are neither better nor worse for one or the other. Here you may well say, *Meat commends us not to God; That which enters into the mouth defiles not the man.*

L. *But to this he replies, that the forbidden fruit which our first Parents tasted, tho, not evil in it self, yet the eating of it was displeasing to God.*

T. And good reason, since God himself had given an express command to the contrary.

L. *And he urges, that so God hath commanded us to obey our Superiors, and therefore to eat what they forbid, is evil, as it is for Children to taste Sugar or Honey contrary to their Parents commands; this, he says, is the wicked will, which coming from the heart defiles the Man.*

T. But all this does not in the least concern us, since thanks be to God, our Church lays no such burdensome and unprofitable commands upon us, however the Pope and his Clergy, like the Pharisees of old, may load the poor people that are under their yoke. Neither yet does any thing he alledges vindicate their Church in making such idle and useless Laws as these which have no manner of tendency to Religion, or

the good of Souls. For what is it to my Souls health, I beseech you, whether I eat a piece of Salmon or the Leg of a Chicken? Whether I take Oil or Butter for my Sawce? Of what moment is this, any more than whether I drink White-wine or Claret, Beer or Ale? In these things every Man is concerned chiefly to look to his own health, and Masters of Families may take order for those under their charge, and Children ought in such things to be ruled by their Parents, since it properly belongs to Parents herein to give orders. Magistrates also, upon a Civil account, may enact such Laws hereabouts as make for the publick good. But for the Church, or any Churchmen to make Laws about these matters, is to arrogate to themselves a power which it does not appear that ever Christ gave them; for it no way tends to edification, but rather to entangle and perplex mens Consciences, and to beget fond conceits that one sort of Meat is more holy than another, which is a meer piece of Judaism, and contrary to the Apostles assertion, *Rom.* 14. 17. These are such silly trifling Injunctions as those of the Pharisees about washing their hands before Dinner and the like, and may as justly be rejected without any thing of a wicked will, or any contempt of that Authority which God hath set over us.

L. But does not our own Church lay the same commands upon its members, viz. *that they abstain from all sorts of Flesh in Lent, and at some other times?*

T. No where that I can tell of. Our Church indeed appoints times of fasting and abstinence for such good ends as I have before mention'd, and these times are to be observed in such manner, with respect to our diet, as that these ends may best be obtained; but neither in any Rubrick, Canon or Homily that ever I met with, does our Church place any Religion in the bare

bare diſtinction of Meats, as to the kind of them: I mean in abſtaining from Fleſh of Beaſts or Birds rather than from the Fleſh of Fiſhes; from Butter rather than Oil, from Milk and Eggs rather than Wine and Oyſters: about theſe things our Church gives no rule that I know of. If at ſuch times we uſe a very ſtrict temperance ſomewhat more than ordinary, and do thereby become more Humble and Charitable, more Devout and Religious, the Church is ſatisfied, and her deſign anſwered; and whether we eat a little Fleſh or a little Fiſh, ſhe is not at all concerned. As to the Laws of the Land, about eating Fiſh rather than Fleſh at certain times, they were Enacted upon a Civil account, not a Religious, *viz.* for the encouragement of Fiſhing-trade, and Navigation, for the benefit of Sea-Towns and the like, as is expreſt in ſome of the Statutes themſelves, and moſt plainly taught in the Homily concerning Faſting. But let us hear what yet remains.

CHAP. XV.

Of withholding the Scriptures from the Common-People.

L. *THere is only one thing more which he endeavours to vindicate from the exceptions made againſt it,* viz. *the forbidding to have the Scriptures in the vulgar language, ſo that the people cannot be admitted to read the ſame, who would be glad (as he expreſſes it) to read and underſtand the laſt Will and Teſtament of their Father.*

T. And what can he alledge for this their cruelty to the people, ſo contrary both to Reaſon and to the very deſign of Writing the Holy Scriptures, as well as to many expreſs commands delivered in thoſe Sacred Writings?

L. *He*

L. *He first says it is not forbidden, so the Bible be not corrupted by Sectaries; and if the people ask leave of their Superiours, to whom it belongs to judge whether they are capable of it.*

T. If by the peoples asking leave he mean their obtaining it, he may say very truly (though very simply) that then they are not forbidden, *viz.* when they have got leave. But in the mean time it's very rare that the people do or dare ask this leave, since it's lookt upon as an ill sign of one inclining to heresie, (as they call it) and to very few by their good will do they grant this liberty, not commonly to any but such of whom they have all possible assurance that they are most firmly addicted to their party. As to his talk of the Bibles being corrupted by Sectaries, so far as it concerns our *English* Bibles (as for others they are able to speak for themselves) it is a most false and malicious reproach, nor are they able to prove it, as hath been sufficiently shewn by the Learned Writers of our Church, who have vindicated this our Translation from the frivolous objections which some *Romanists* have made against it. But besides that this is a vile slander, it is also a meer pretence as they make use of it, to defend their forbidding the people to read our *English* Bibles. For why else do they not more generally permit them to read the Bible of their own Translation, their *Doway* Bible, and *Rhemish* Testament? They dare not well trust their people even with these, notwithstanding all their corrupt glosses in the Margent, to make the Text speak in favour of their own opinions; at least they give little or no encouragement to the reading of them. For you shall seldom find them in the hands or houses of Papists amongst us. And though they are forced to give somewhat more liberty to such as live in Protestant-Countries,

tries, or where there are great numbers of Proteſtants, as in *France*; yet if you go but over into *Spain* or *Italy*, where the Pope and his Clergy bear more ſway, there you ſhall hardly find in a whole Country one Bible in their own language, in the hands of any of the people. Yea if it ſhould be found, it might bring them into danger of the Inquiſition, and perhaps might coſt them their lives. Thus ſevere they were alſo in *England* at the beginning of the Reformation, and moſt vehemently oppoſed the Tranſlation of the Scriptures into *Engliſh*, and did all they could to ſuppreſs them, even ſometimes burning the Bibles together with the Martyrs in Queen *Maries* days, being wont to ſay, this was the Book that made all the Hereticks. And it was indeed the Book from whence they learned thoſe Truths which Papiſts as falſely call hereſie, as the Phariſees did that Chriſtian Doctrine which St. *Paul* preached.

L. *There is little doubt but that common people of the* Romiſh *Church are generally kept from reading the Scripture, ſince I find not that my Author himſelf does directly deny it; nay he rather owns it, whilſt he goes on to plead that all good things are not good for all; ſome abuſe wine though it be good; and among Sectaries who will read the Bible, ſome underſtand it one way, ſome another, whence ariſe daily new hereſies. For there are many hard paſſages, he adds, which are ill underſtood by people that have little or no learning. So St.* Peter *teſtifies*, 2 Pet. 3. *and therefore, as when there is diſpute about any clauſe in a Will, the Will is put into the hands of Proctors, Lawyers, and Judges skil'd in the Law; ſo in order to our being ſufficiently informed of the Will of our Saviour Chriſt, we muſt go to Sermons and Catechiſms, there to be inſtructed in publick or private as much as we will.*

T. This is their common objection againſt the peoples

peoples reading the Scriptures, that they are in danger of mistaking the sense of them, and so may fall into error or heresie. But pray consider if this be a sufficient reason for their not reading them, might it not have served as well to prevent the first writing of them, especially in a language which the common people understood? yet thus it was at the first; for the Law was given to the *Jews* in their own language, and in the same was the rest of the Old Testament written. Thus also the New Testament was written in *Greek*, a language then most generally understood in the world. And the Apostles wrote their Epistles to the Churches in this same language, which the common people did all understand. So that by their arguing, this was a defect of the Divine Wisdom, to let the Scriptures come abroad at first in such a Tongue as the people were well acquainted with. Yet more than this, how frequently do we find in the Old Testament expres commands given to the people to acquaint themselves with the Law, and to instruct their children in it with all possible care and diligence, as you may see *Deut.* 6 6. and in many other places. This was the commendation both of *Timothy* and his Parents, that from *a child he had known the holy Scriptures*, &c. 2 *Tim.* 3. 15. Thus our Saviour bids the people *search the Scriptures*, Joh. 5. 39. This was the honour of the *Beræans* that they examined the Apostles Doctrine by the Scriptures, *Act.* 17. 11. And this the Apostles still inculcated, that the people should take heed to the Scriptures, as *to a light shining in a dark place.* Now all this is spoken of the Books of the Old Testament, and surely there is every whit as much reason that we Christians should be as diligent in reading and studying the New Testament, where we have the most heavenly Discourses of our Blessed Saviour, with the History

ſtory of his Life and Death, and the Epiſtles written by his holy Apoſtles, in all which we to this day are moſt nearly concerned, even the meaneſt of the people as well as others, and therefore they ought to have not only leave but all poſſible encouragement to be very converſant therein. This we are ſure was the judgment of the Chriſtian Church of old: for ſoon after the Apoſtles times, theſe Holy Scriptures, eſpecially the Books of the New-teſtament, were tranſlated into the ſeveral Languages of thoſe people who had embraced the Goſpel, by holy and Learned men who were deſirous to eſtabliſh the Chriſtian Religion amongſt them. And ſo we find in ſucceeding times the Chriſtian Writers very earneſtly recommending the ſtudy of Scripture to the common people, even to the women themſelves, and highly applauding thoſe who did moſt exerciſe themſelves herein. The people then had Bibles in their hands, and it was accounted a high crime to deliver them up to the Heathens that ſought for them. That *Latin* Tranſlation of the Bible which is now in uſe amongſt the Learned of the Church of *Rome*, is a plain teſtimony againſt themſelves; for *Latin* was once the vulgar tongue of the people of *Rome*, and the Countries about it, and for their ſakes the Bible was tranſlated out of *Hebrew* and *Greek* into that Language which was then in uſe. And tho' ſome may miſtake the ſence of Scripture, and as St. *Peter* ſpeaks, *may wreſt it to their own deſtruction*, yet is that no reaſon why it ſhould be kept from common people, nor does St. *Peter* ſay the leaſt word to any ſuch purpoſe, he himſelf writing his Epiſtles to be read by them. But rather he exhorts them to *beware of being led away by the error of the wicked, and to grow in grace, and the knowledg of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt*, 2 Pet. 3. 17, 18. And ſurely there is

no

no better way to encreaſe in the knowledg of Chriſt, than by ſtudying his own holy Goſpel, where we have a full account of him, and of all that he did and ſuffered for our ſakes, and wherein are contain'd all the Doctrines and precepts of the Chriſtian Religion. If ſome men abuſe wine, it does not therefore follow that even theſe men themſelves muſt be always kept from it, if they may be reduced to ſobriety and moderation in the uſe of it; much leſs ought wine to be therefore generally forbidden to others of whom it is not known that they do or will abuſe it. Neither yet does the compariſon hold; for wine may in it ſelf be hurtful to ſome mens bodies, ſo that water may be fitter for them: but if any man receive hurt from the Scriptures, the fault is not in them but in himſelf who falls into error through his own ignorance or inconſiderateneſs. And the beſt way to prevent or cure his error, is not to forbid him the uſe of holy Scripture, but inſtruct him how to uſe it aright, perſwade him chiefly to mind that which is plain and eaſie, and to frame his belief and practice accordingly, by which means he ſhall by the grace of God be enabled to know and do all that is neceſſary to Salvation. As for other matters that are more difficult and leſs needful, let him paſs over them, or ſtay till he find an Interpreter. He that is thus humble and modeſt, will be far from abuſing Scripture to his hurt; and he that is not ſo, may as well miſtake and abuſe thoſe Doctrines which he meets with in Sermons and Catechiſms, and therefore by that reaſon ſhould be kept from them too. Nay if this reaſon hold good, that Scripture muſt be withheld from the people becauſe they are in danger of perverting them to ill purpoſes, then they ſhould rather be kept from the Learned than the ignorant; for we ſhall find that commonly men of learning and knowledg

knowledge have been the Authors of those Heresies which have at any time disturbed the Church, whilst men of meaner capacities, but of more piety and humility, have by the benefit of the Holy Scriptures been preserved in the truth. But are they indeed so careful of the people, that out of pure kindness to their Souls they will not trust them with these holy Books, for fear they should abuse them to their hurt? How comes it to pass then that instead of these they provide other Books for them, in which there is a thousand times more danger, I mean Images and Pictures which they call Lay-mens Books, from whence they are rather like to learn Superstition and Idolatry, than any thing which is good? Thus even in a literal sense whilst their people need bread, they put them off with stocks and stones. To say nothing of those other Books which have heretofore been very common among them, *viz.* their lying Legends, composed by lazy Monks, full of such ridiculous stories and gross falsehoods that they are now ashamed to have them seen amongst Protestants.

L. *He compares the Scriptures to a Fathers Testament, but surely it's an odd way to make the Son understand his Father's Will by wresting it out of his hands, and putting him off with other writings instead of it.*

T. An odd way it is indeed, and gives just cause to suspect those of ill design who make use of it. For when the Son meets with any obscure clause in his Father's Will, though he go to consult the Lawyer about it, yet he still keeps the Will in his own hand, or a true Copy of it. But if the Lawyer should by violence take it from him, and let him know no more of it than he sees good, the poor man might well think himself very much wronged. Especially if the Lawyer should proceed by vertue of this Will to encroach upon

upon the mans right, and yet will not allow him the benefit of having the Will to plead on his own behalf. And this is plainly the course of the *Roman* Church in the present case, for the Rulers withhold the Scripture from the people, that they may the more easily detain them in a blind obedience to those Doctrines and commands of their own which are contrary to it, and which they will not have examined by it. And you may well suspect the man has bad wares to put off, who will expose them no where but in a dark shop. It's much to be feared that Guide means not well; who would have my eyes put out or fast closed that I may follow him blindfold. He that teaches falshood as well as he that does evil, is afraid of the light that will discover his error. But to conclude this, whatever Papists may talk of the *obscurity* of Scripture, the true reason why they keep it out of the peoples hands is because it is too *plain*. I mean because it so plainly contradicts several Doctrines and practices that are now current in their Church. So plainly does the second Commandment forbid all worship of Images, that by their good will they would not have it come into the peoples sight. And as plainly doth the holy Scripture in other places forbid the worship of Angels or Saints, having prayers in an unknown tongue, the taking away the Cup from the Laity; plainly it confutes their Doctrine of Transubstantiation, whilst it calls the holy Elements bread after Consecration. In these and several other instances doth Scripture so plainly make against them, that no wonder if therefore they are so much against the Scripture, as that they will not commonly permit the people to read it, but keep back from them this key of knowledge.

L. *This seems to be the true reason, but so bad a one that they are ashamed to own it. And now I return you unfeigned*

feigned thanks for the pains you have taken to confirm me in the truth, and to ſhew me the vanity and weakneſs of thoſe arguings wherewith they of the Church of Rome *do endeavour to excuſe and palliate their groſs errors, and to impoſe upon common people who are ſometimes eaſily miſled.*

T. No great wonder if with their ſubtilties they impoſe upon ſuch as cannot well diſtinguiſh betwixt ſpecious pretences and ſolid reaſonings. And indeed they do in ſome meaſure deſerve to be impoſed upon, who will ſo far truſt to their own weak judgments, as not to ſeek direction and aſſiſtance from thoſe who are able to give it; but do preſently conclude, that if they themſelves cannot anſwer a cunning Prieſt, no body elſe can, and thereupon without more ado become his eaſie proſelytes: eſpecially when ſome worldly intereſt draws them to it, which is an argument quickly diſcerned, but not eaſily reſiſted. Yet it's ſtrange to ſee how theſe ſame perſons when they are gone off from our Church, preſently ſeem ſo humble and modeſt as to ſuſpect their own judgments, they commonly refuſe to diſcourſe with our Miniſters, pretending they are not fit to meddle with controverſies, nor hold diſputes. They now refer themſelves wholly to the Church, (their own Sect) the *Romiſh* Church, that muſt be their Judg and their Guide. They might before diſpute and yield, and be Judges for themſelves, when they left our Church: but now forſooth they are got, as the Prieſt tells them (whoſe word they muſt take for it) into an infallible Church, whoſe Doctrines and Commands muſt never be queſtioned or examined, nor any thing heard that can be objected againſt them. All muſt be ſwallow'd without chewing, they muſt believe as the Church believes, though what that is they do not well know. This is the way that *Romiſh* Prieſts commonly take with them, and a

cunning way it is for securing of the Converts they have once made, but so grosly partial, that a man of ordinary discretion may readily discern it, and no sincere lover of truth will be drawn to comply with it. For how can any man answer it to God or his own conscience, to depart from that Church wherein he has been baptized and educated, without a fair hearing what can be said *for* it; and when he is drawn away into another Church becomes so fixed and resolute that he'l hear nothing that can be said *against it*? But you I confess have acted at another rate, and I cannot but commend your ingenuity and diligence herein, which I pray God to succeed for your establishment in that holy Religion in which you have hitherto been instructed, and from which I hope you'l never be perverted. For it is the very truth of God, taught by his Son Jesus in his holy Gospel, the only infallible rule of Faith and Manners.

L. *I do stedfastly believe that it is so, and by the grace of God will never depart from it.*

T. Does your Author meddle with no other points of controversie betwixt us and the Church of *Rome*?

L. *He mentions no more that I find, looking upon these I suppose as most material; but toward the end of this Chapter he heaps up many bitter invectives against our Ministers, as if they spoke ill of the* Romish *Church out of meer malice, against their consciences, only to make Papists envied and hated; and that they often cite the holy Scripture to no purpose, or to an ill one, and do also falsifie and cut off what is not to their liking, yea and have put whole Books out of the number of Canonical Scriptures; in fine, that they do all as the toy takes them, without thinking of any judgment or Hell to come after.*

T. This is very severe indeed, but so grosly false and spiteful that it deserves no more notice or answer than

than the revilings of an angry ſcold. Only to the laſt heavy charge of putting out whole Books of Holy Scripture I ſhall anſwer a few words, and leave you to judg of the reſt by what truth you ſhall find in this Accuſation.

Know then that as to the New Teſtament we receive for Canonical all the ſame Books which the Church of *Rome* it ſelf does, and all other Chriſtian Churches in the world ſo far as ever I have heard. And as to the Old Teſtament, we receive all thoſe Books which were acknowledged for Canonical by the *Jewiſh* Church (who are very competent witneſſes in this caſe) or by the Chriſtian Church for Four hundred years after our Saviour, as learned Writers of our Church have demonſtrated, and particularly Biſhop *Cozens* before named in his Hiſtory of the Canon of Scripture. As to thoſe Books which are called Apocryphal, though we have them not in the ſame eſteem with the Sacred Writings of the Old and New Teſtament, yet we have a juſt value for them, as the works of pious men, and of great antiquity; and our Church appoints Leſſons out of them to be publickly read (tho not on the Lords days) thereby recommending them to the people, who have them in their hands, and may read them as much as they pleaſe. And eſpecially thoſe two Books, *Eccleſiaſticus* and that of *Wiſdom* are well worthy to be read again and again, as containing moſt excellent moral rules for the direction and guidance of our lives. Conſider then what an impudent thing it is for *Papiſts* to accuſe our Church for putting out theſe Books of *Apocrypha*, which yet are in ſo much uſe amongſt us, whilſt they themſelves endeavour in ſome ſort to make the whole Bible Apocryphal, I mean by their hiding it ſo much from the common people, putting away not only ſome but even all the Books of

Holy Writ very much from their sight. And some of their Authors do speak so meanly and contemptibly of these holy Books (which do so little service to their cause) that they seem not to have so much respect for them as we have for the *Apocrypha* it self. So that they of all people have least reason to condemn others for slighting or rejecting the holy Scriptures; and our Church hath as little reason to be condemned as any other in the whole world. As to his other spiteful suggestions, I leave it to your self or any other impartial person to judg whether I have said any thing against the Doctrine of their Church without giving good reason for it. And I can assure you I have not in this whole Discourse said one word against my conscience; neither would I have you envy or hate any mans person, be he Papist or what he will, whilst you abstain from their errors. For though I do dot believe the Popish fiction of Purgatory, yet I do firmly believe there is a future Judgment, and an Hell prepared for the wicked and ungodly, particularly for lyers and slanderers, and for such as hate their neighbours upon any pretence whatever. And is this all that your Author has to say?

L. He adds nothing more in this Chapter, but advice to these who are seduced (as he calls it) that they should beg light from God, and weigh what he has said, and seek more instruction from good and learned Catholicks, meaning I suppose, Popish Priests chiefly.

T. There's little doubt of it. Now to prevent your being seduced by those who call themselves Catholicks but are not truly so, I shall wish you to follow his advice so far as it's good. Humbly beg of God to enlighten your mind with the knowledg of the truth, and be ever careful to do the Will of God so far as you know it, that so you may be the better qualified for the

the assistance and direction of his good Spirit, which delights in men of pure hearts and humble minds. Moreover I advise you to weigh impartially what is said on both sides, and then be true to your own judgment and conscience in following that which has the plainest and fullest evidence of its truth. I would not have you out of pride and vanity thrust your self upon disputes; but when you cannot well avoid the discourses of their Priests or Gentlemen, if you happen to be at any time somewhat puzled with their arguments, do not hastily conclude them to be unanswerable, but consult with your Minister or such as may be best able to inform and satisfie you. And you may do well to furnish your self with some of those books that are written by our Divines in defence of the Church of *England* against the Papists: but above all books, let me earnestly request you with great diligence to study and search the holy Scriptures, for in them you shall find the true way to eternal life. Read there our Blessed Saviours own most Heavenly Discourses, who spake as never man spake, and particularly read often his most admirable Sermon in the Mount, where you have the summ of Christian Religion. Read also the several Epistles of the Apostles, with the rest of those Sacred Writings, as you have opportunity, and then honestly and impartially compare the Doctrines of our Church and those of the Church of *Rome* which differ from ours, with what is taught in these same holy books: and what you shall find to be most plainly agreeable thereto, that own and embrace, and evermore firmly adhere to.

L. *The Counsel you give me is most fair and reasonable, which hitherto I have endeavoured to follow, and by Gods grace will continue so to do. For I can truly say it, my chief design is to please God and save my soul: And I*

cannot imagin any surer way to attain this, than by studying well the Word of God, wherein he hath revealed his will, and the way to eternal salvation. And certainly God is so good and gracious that he will not fail to direct and guide those into the right way, who with sincere and honest minds do above all things desire and endeavour to know his will that they may do it. Yea I look upon it as an instance of his kindness and good providence, that I so happily met with you from whom I have received such full satisfaction. And as for the subtle arguments of Papists, I hope by that assistance which you have already given me, and yet further will do, I shall in a good measure be able to answer them. In the following Chapter my Author produces several of these subtilties, which he calls pregnant arguments against Sectaries, and these I shall desire you to consider, and give an answer to.

T. I am very willing to do it, but that I may not tire you, we'l refer this to our next meeting.

L. *I am well content, only one favour I shall request, that in the mean time you would please, at your leisure, to send me in writing the sum of what you have now discoursed, that I may have the benefit of peruſing it, and fixing it better in my mind.*

T. I shall readily grant your request; and praying God to lead you into, and settle you in the truth, shall for this time bid you farewell.

L. *Farewell, Good Sir.*

THE

The Second PART.

CHAP. I.

Containing an Answer to some Arguments against Protestants.

T. WELL met, Friend.

L. I am heartily glad Sir, to meet you again so soon, and do return you many thanks both for the pains you took in your late Conference with me and that you was pleased, as I desired, to send me the summ of it in writing, which I have read over again and again to my fuller satisfaction.

T. I shall reckon my self very well recompenced for what pains I have taken, if you reap any Advantage thereby.

L. That I have done very much, I thank God. For upon the review of my Popish Author, so far as we have proceeded, I meet not there with any objection against our Religion, nor with any argument for Popery but what I can easily answer. Nay more than this, since I was with you, I have read over the last Chapter of his Book, the consideration of which you defer'd till this our second meeting, and truly I have not been much gravel'd with any thing in it, but can tolerably well give answer thereto from what I have already heard from you. Nor do I find here much that is new, but many of the same things in other words dress up with much art and cunning.

T. I am glad you are so good a proficient; and since you tell me this, let us if you will, for a while at least, take a new Method in our following discourse. Give

me your Book, and for the tryal of your skill I'le propose thence the arguments which your Author makes use of, and you shall return answers to the same.

L. *I shall do my best, but must crave your assistance when I am at a loss.*

T. That you may be sure I shall readily give, and if we meet with many the same things which we have had already, we shall the quicklier dispatch them. Only something I have to premise before I come to his arguments.

In the beginning of this his last Chapter he brings in his Scholar desiring to be furnish'd with some pregnant arguments for the reducing of Sectaries to the Catholick Church, which he says they have groundlesly forsaken and cruelly persecuted. Now what ground we (whom he unjustly calls Sectaries) had to forsake the *Romish* Church (not the Catholick) we have already shewn, and shall do more, but whilst he would insinuate that we Protestants have been grievous persecutors of Papists, this I am sure is a very groundless charge, and I wonder he had the impudence to fasten it upon us; especially considering how infamous their own Church hath long been for the most cruel bloody persecution of poor Protestants, meerly upon account of Religion, and that in this Kingdom, to go no further: Whereas it's very rare that any Papist hath suffered the loss of his life amongst us purely upon that account, nor should I desire ever to see such severity used toward them or any other Sect, if they will but live peaceably and not disturb the Government. But most certain and undeniable it is, that many of them have suffered for downright Treason and Rebellion, as in the Gunpowder Plot, and at several other times, and indeed our Laws make it Treason for any of the King's Subjects to go to the Church of *Rome* for Orders, and then come over to draw away the people into communion

communion with that Church; this being look'd on as a ſeducing of them from their Allegiance to his Majeſty, which no wiſe Prince will ſuffer. And with good reaſon is it ſo look'd on, ſince few of theſe Prieſts will take the Oath of Allegiance, and do reckon themſelves exempt from the Civil power, and both they and their deluded proſelytes are taught to prefer the power of a foreign Potentate, *viz.* the Biſhop of *Rome*, before that of their own Prince. Some of them indeed ſay (not all) that this his power is only in Spirituals: but whilſt the Pope is Judge in his own cauſe, what either is ſpiritual, or has a tendency to it, may he not under this pretence extend his power as far as he pleaſes? as you heard before. But tho in this & other inſtances the principles of Papiſts are extremely dangerous to the Civil Government, yet I wonder whether Proteſtants may be permitted to live as quietly in *Italy* or *Spain*, as thouſands of Papiſts do here in *England*. Nay at this day even in *France* it ſelf, what diſturbances and perſecutions do poor Proteſtants meet with? and that chiefly, as is ſaid, through the malicious inſtigations of fierce and furious Clergy men, whilſt yet we hear not that they can in the leaſt charge them with any ſeditious or unpeaceable behaviour. What impudence then is it for Papiſts to caſt ſuch diſhonourable reflections upon our Government, whether of Church or State, as if we were guilty of I know not what rigorous proceedings againſt them? Whereas it will be hard to find any where in Chriſtendon more mildneſs than in the Church of *England*, nor any where more cruelty and ſeverity than in that of *Rome*, whoſe bloody Inquiſition has been long talked of throughout the World.

But to follow your Author; yet before he brings forth his Arguments, he tells us, that Chriſt ſends us to the Church, quoting *Matt.* 18. 17. That if we neglect

lect to hear the Church, we must be counted for no better than Heathens and Publicans. What this makes to his purpose I do not well understand. For this seems plainly to be meant of that particular Church whereof we are Members, in peaceable communion wherewith we ought to live, rendring chearful obedience to all its lawful injunctions. But what's this to the Church of *Rome*, which neither has any Authority over us in *England*, and whose impositions are notoriously sinful? He next quotes that of St. *Paul*, 1 Tim. 3. 15. *That the Church is the Pillar and ground of truth.* Which is true both of the Catholick Church, and of every particular Church that is a sound Member of it. For hereby is declared that the truth of the Gospel, that is, the Christian Religion, is carefully preserved, openly profest and taught in the Christian Church. The expression here made use of is commonly thought to allude to the fixing up of Writings upon a Pillar in some publick place, that they may be seen and read of all, like that in *Josh.* 8. 37. But still I am to seek what this makes for his advantage: If he only intend by these Quotations to prove that a Man ought to live in communion with the true Church of Christ, and to behave himself peaceably and obediently in that particular Church of which he is a Member, Who denies it? Or what will he gain by it? Since this tends nothing to prove it our duty to become Members of the *Romish* Church to believe all her Doctrines, and obey her commands. Well, but this is that he will now demonstrate we are all bound to, and that by five Arguments, all of them, as he fancies, most strong and unanswerable, which we shall particularly survey, and examine the strength of them. His first is, *That Church is to be heard in which there is most assurance that one is in the way to Salvation; but in the* Roman *Church there*

is

is moſt aſſurance of this, and therefore ſhe is to be heard and obey'd. What ſay you to this?

L. *I deny that there is moſt aſſurance of our being in the way to Salvation in the* Roman *Church.*

T. And well you may; but thus he goes on to prove it, *Proteſtants grant that one living and dying in the* Roman *Church may be ſav'd, elſe they condemn all their Anceſtors to the pit of Hell: and therefore thoſe of that Church have moſt aſſurance of their Salvation, ſince it is granted by all that they are in the way to it; and thus he ſays it has been held by all the World, time out of mind.* And to give full ſtrength to his argument, we muſt add what he has in other places, that *Papiſts* deny that a *Proteſtant* can be ſaved, whilſt *Proteſtants* grant that a *Papiſt* may; and therefore does not the *Papiſt* ſeem to be of the ſurer ſide?

L. *No, but the quite contrary, I think, may be concluded from this very argument, ſince, as I have before heard from you, this very uncharitableneſs of the* Papiſts *in condemning all that are not of their way, makes their own Salvation to be very hazardous* (Judge not, *ſaith our Saviour*, leſt ye be judged) *whilſt the* Proteſtant *by his Charity ſhews himſelf to be a better Chriſtian, and conſequently in the ſurer way to Salvation. And had I no other argument againſt turning* Papiſt, *this alone would keep me from it, that I ſhould then ſtand bound by the Decrees of Popes and Popiſh Councils to look upon all men in a ſtate of Damnation who are out of the* Romiſh *Church: for ſo they have determined, as I have often heard, and my Author ſeems plainly to aſſert it.*

T. There is a great deal of Truth and Reaſon in what you ſay; For this is the current Doctrine of their Church, though ſome of the common people will not own it. But beſides this, it is to be conſidered, that though a *Proteſtant* may have charitable thoughts of an honeſt *Papiſt*, yet this makes nothing at all for the commendation of Popery, ſince it is

not

not for *this* that he is saved (not for his embracing of *Popery*, I mean) but for his belief of the Gospel, and his obedience to it. In the mean time *Popery* is his disease, and makes his condition very hazardous, only we hope that possibly he may be saved notwithstanding it. As a man that has the Plague, or has taken poison. it's possible he may recover, but yet his condition is very sad and full of danger; and no man in his wits will venture upon Poison or a Pesthouse, because there is a possibility of escaping. Whatever Charity then we may have for a well-meaning *Papist*, I'le assure you we have no good opinion of *Popery*: but do with great reason assert, that they who embrace it do run a great hazard of their Salvation; whilst they entertain Doctrines, not only false in themselves, but very pernicious in their effects, being great hindrances to piety and holiness, without which no man shall see God. And beside their bad Doctrines, great is their danger, whilst they corrupt Religion by their Idolatrous worship; and here in this Kingdom disobey their Rulers, and Schismatically withdraw from that Church with which they ought to hold Communion, and this meerly in compliance with the usurpation of a foreign Power. These and many other ill things they do, which we would not for a World be guilty of. yet after all, we are not rash to pass a Sentence of Damnation upon them; to their own Master let them stand or fall; to whose mercy we leave them, whilst they deliver us up to Satan. But this while our Charity gives small encouragement to a wise man to turn *Papist*.

L. *If the rest of his Arguments be like this, there's no such strength in them as he boasts of.*

T. You must not expect good Arguments for a bad Cause. As to what he talks of condemning our Ancestors

ceſtors to Hell, it no way follows, though we ſhould be of opinion that Salvation is not ordinarily to be had in the preſent Church of *Rome*. For thoſe Anceſtors of ours who firſt embraced Chriſtianity, were no *Papiſts*, paid no homage to the Biſhop of *Rome*; neither in thoſe days had that Church defiled it ſelf with thoſe corruptions which were brought in by degrees in after Ages. And withal, the ignorance of our forefathers in thoſe corrupter times may do ſomewhat to excuſe them: but ſhould we continue in their errors, who now enjoy the clearer light of the Goſpel, we were utterly inexcuſable. Whilſt we have charity for our Anceſtors, we ought to take care of our own Souls. Neither yet was there any time when the whole World own'd the *Roman* Church to be the only way to Salvation, as he boldly and falſly aſſerts.

L. *Surely no: For when Religion was moſt pure in the Church of* Rome, *no doubt but the Members of any other ſound and orthodox Church might be ſaved as well as thoſe of that Church, which did not then claim juriſdiction over all other Churches, as you have formerly told me, nor was it looked upon as neceſſary to Salvation for a Man to own the Popes Supremacy in thoſe early days.*

T. Moſt certainly it was not; nor is there any more reaſon that now it ſhould. I am ſure this is none which your Author has produced, *viz.* That *Proteſtants* generally grant it poſſible for a *Papiſt* to be ſaved, whilſt *Papiſts* will not grant that a *Proteſtant* can. On which I ſhall beſtow a few more words. And pray take notice that this is a very deceitfull way of Arguing, and has little of ſtrength in it if it be well examined. A *Proteſtant* is never the worſe for a *Papiſts* hard thoughts of him, nor a *Papiſt* the better for our greater charity to him. We have other Rules and Meaſures by which we are to proceed in the preſent

sent case, and are to consider whether the *Papist* has any good reason for his uncharitable opinion, else he himself may be hurt by it, but not we nor our Cause. Sometimes, I grant, in matters of difference, a Man may be inclinable to yield to that which he perceives both parties are agreed in, but this will by no means be found in the case before us. For the *Protestant* does not grant the *Papist* to be in a safe way to Salvation; nor yet that *Popery* (truly so called) is at all the way to Salvation, but rather a great hindrance to it: the utmost he grants is only this, that possibly a *Papist*, notwithstanding the dangerous errors and corruptions of their Church, may be saved. But in the mean time he asserts, and he proves that the belief and practice of the Holy Christian Religion, which is most purely profest amongst *Protestants*, is the surest and safest way to Salvation. Now, when a *Papist* shall come and tell you that *Protestants* are no Christians, have no Faith, no Holiness, are out of the Catholick Church, and therefore cannot possibly be saved, all this noise and nonsence ought no more to affect you than the ravings of a Mad-man, or the like rude and insolent Language of furious *Quakers*, who, like Madmen indeed at their first coming up, used to cry aloud to any Man that opposed them, *Thou art damn'd, Man, thou art damn'd.* And at this rate, I have heard, do the wretched besotted followers of *Muggleton* talk at this day. And truly herein both they and the *Papists* deserve to be regarded all alike; That is, the Men pitied, and their Censures slighted and despised.

And yet to shew you more plainly, if it may be, the folly of this way of Arguing, let me give you a like instance whereby you may judg of it, which, with others of the same nature, I find made use of by some of our Writers to this same purpose. Suppose

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we then a Man ſick of ſome dangerous Diſeaſe, and ſeeking to an able Phyſician for advice, which when he has received, and is about to follow it, in comes a bold Mountebank and tells the Man it's utterly impoſſible he ſhould ever recover by hearkning to his Phyſician; but if he will be guided by him, all ſhall be well, for he has an infallible Cure at hand that will certainly do the work. Now, ſuppoſe the Phyſician be ſo modeſt that he will not anſwer this impudent Quack in his own language, nor ſay it's impoſſible for his Medicines to do any good, only he deals honeſtly with his Patient, and tells him of the danger of truſting himſelf in ſuch a Mans hands, who takes very deſperate courſes, and where he cures one, kills Twenty: but for himſelf he ſhall preſcribe nothing but what he can demonſtrate to be ſafe and good, and which, through Gods bleſſing, hath often been very effectual. Now in point of prudence, what ought the Patient to do in this caſe? What, muſt he reject a skilful and ſafe Phyſician becauſe he ſpeaks with modeſty and caution, and chuſe the daring ignorant Mountebank, becauſe he talks big and boldly, and boaſts of Infallible Receipts, of a certain and ſpeedy Cure?

L. *No ſurely, by no means.*

T. Yet ſo he ſhould do by this Authours Argument for the choice of their Church, becauſe, forſooth, ſhe condemns all others and commends her ſelf, talking as much of Infallibility as the moſt cheating Mountebank is uſed to do, and with much what the ſame reaſon, and truth. The Caſe is ſo like, that I need not trouble you with applying it.

L. No, you need not: For I underſtand it well enough, and as well do I diſcern the weakneſs of his Argument.

T. And yet for your fuller ſatisfaction, if need be, I would have you read that Sermon I formerly told you

you of, on 1 *Cor.* 3. 13. by a Reverend Divine of the Church of *England*, where you will find this piece of sophistry so shamefully baffled and exposed, that he must be a very silly and shameless Priest that will ever offer to make use of it more. Wherefore, to all that hath been said on this subject, I shall only suggest one thing more to your consideration, *viz.* that so far as this Argument hath any force in it, it may with great advantage be retorted on *Papists* themselves. For if that way be safest to be chosen in which both parties are agreed, then are we *Protestants* clearly on the safer side: For they themselves own the Scriptures which we embrace, they approve of the Creeds which we hold, they cannot but allow of the Worship of God in the name of Jesus Christ, with all other the substantials of our Religion, which as I have often said, is nothing else but Christianity it self. But now we do utterly disown the Additions which the *Romish* Church has made to the Ancient Creeds, many of their Traditions we also reject as being plainly repugnant to the Holy Scriptures; we condemn their Worship of Images, of Angels and Saints, as being neither commanded by God, nor practised by the Church of Christ in the Primitive times. Hence then you may be informed what is safest to chuse and follow, whether the plain and pure Religion of Jesus Christ profest in our Church, and acknowledged by all Christians in the World, even by the Papists themselves, or to swallow down all those new Articles which their Church has added to the Christian Faith, and defile our selves with those superstitions with which they have corrupted the worship of God: Many of which Doctrines and Practices are disapproved by all Christians but those of their own sect. and which, upon good grounds, we believe to be so utterly unlawful and pernicious, that they make the condition of those in the *Romish*

Church

Church very hazardous, and for our selves should we embrace them, we could have no hopes of Salvation. Judg then upon the whole, what is safest to be chosen.

L. *I confess I see little or no difficulty in the Case, wherefore pray proceed to the second Argument.*

T. I shall repeat to you what he calls so, though for my part, I find nothing in it that may deserve the name of an Argument. Thus it runs, *That Church is not to be heard, whose Authors and chief Doctors are meer Cozeners and Impostors*; *and such, he says, are all but those of the* Roman *Church, and therefore are not to be heard.*

L. *I deny that the Authors and Doctors of our Church are Cozeners and Impostors.*

T. Thus he goes about to prove it, *They all say that they will reform the* Roman *Church with the pure Word of God*, and yet they have never done it, nor will ever be able, and therefore they are all meer Cozeners and Impostors: This is all the proof he gives.

L. *This all seems to me just nothing: for I reckon that the Author of our Religion was no other than our Blessed Saviour*; *and the first Teachers (if it were the holy Apostles and Evangelists, who taught it by their Preaching, and then committed it to writing in the Holy Word of God, which we most readily embrace, and in which our Religion is wholly contained. And surely these were no Cozeners or Impostors*; *but rather they who have corrupted Religion by their own novel inventions, contrary to this Holy Word.*

T. This is very true that you say, but here by the Authors of our Church, he means those Learned men who were instrumental for the reforming it from those inventions, which he pleads for as a part of Religion.

L. *This I believe to be his meaning. But since these good men, by Gods assistance, did actually reform our Church by the pure Word of God, from those Popish corruptions wherewith it was before polluted, I admire why he*

should say they were Cozeners and Impostors for not doing what they pretended they would, when as they have really done it.

T. And admire you still may: For I cannot guess at his reason; except by the *Roman* Church he means that particular Church which is at *Rome*; or else the whole Sect of *Papists*, all who own the Supremacy of the Bishop of *Rome*, and so stile themselves the *Romish* Church. Take it in either of these senses, and I confess this *Romish* Church is not yet reformed. But this rather shews their obstinacy than any thing of deceitfulness in those who have attempted their Reformation. If the Prophets and pious people of old would have healed *Babylon* and she would not be healed, was this any dishonour to the Prophets? Neither surely were any of the first Reformers so vain, as to say that they would certainly reform the whole Church of *Rome*, though they might heartily desire it, and in their several places diligently endeavour it. And thanks be to God, through his assistance and blessing, these their endeavours have been most happily successful in many Nations of the World, and particularly in this our Kingdom of *England*, for the delivering of our Church from the Usurpation of the Pope, and from the corruptions of Popery: the blessed Fruits whereof we do at this day enjoy, and hope we shall still continue so to do, through the same Divine Grace and Favour which first bestowed this mercy upon us, tho most unworthy of the same. But leave we this shadow of an Argument, and pass to his third.

L. *Pray do so.*

T. It is this, *That Church is only to be heard which has all the marks of a true Church; but the* Roman *Church has them, and no other, therefore she only is to be heard. These marks, as he goes on, are Antiquity, Miracles, Holiness of Life and Doctrine, Universality, Unity,*

nity, Succession of Bishops from the Apostles; these he calls Infallible Marks of the true Church, which belong to none but that of *Rome*.

L. *These marks of the Church, or most of them, I do well remember you spoke largely to in the beginning of our first Conference; and from what you have there said, I am furnished with a sufficient Answer to this Argument, viz. that the Church of* Rome, *as it is now corrupted with those Doctrines wherein* Popery *consists, (such as the Popes Supremacy and Infallibility, Purgatory, Transubstantiation, &c.) cannot truly plead these marks he lays down. For these Popish Doctrines are not of the same* Antiquity *with pure Christianity; there never were any true* Miracles *wrought to confirm them; they are not* Holy *in themselves, nor do tend to promote* Holiness of Life, *but rather the contrary; they are not, nor ever were* Universally *received by all Christian Churches; nor is there much* Unity *among themselves in their explication of them; though if there were, this signifies nothing, as being but the Unity of a Sect within it self: and though their Bishops may live in the same City that the Apostles once did, yet they did not receive these Doctrines from the Apostles, but have introduced them since, some at one time, some at another, and therefore in respect of Doctrine they are not the Apostles Successors, nor are to be hearkned to as such.*

T. What you alledg is most undeniably true. And let me further add, that suppose the Church of *Rome* were now as pure in its Doctrine and Worship as in the very days of the Apostles it was, so that these marks did really belong to it, yet this is no good Argument that we must all therefore be of the Church of *Rome*, if ever we hope to be saved; since many other Churches might plead the same, even all that received the Christian Religion in the same purity and simplicity, whose Members therefore might have as good grounds to hope for Salvation. But when we

further consider how that Church has degenerated from its Primitive purity, (beside that it has no dominion over us) there is still much less reason that we should, for the embracing of her communion, desert our own Church of *England*, which is a most sound part of the Catholick Church as any this day in Christendom. To her agree all the marks of a true Church as I have formerly shewn. She hath these mention'd by this Author, Antiquity, *&c.* For the Doctrines of our Church are as old as the times of our Saviour and his Apostles. This is that true Christian Doctrine which was confirmed by all those *Miracles* which are recorded in the *New-Testament*. These Doctrines are all *Holy* as well as *True*, and have a natural tendency to make men *Holy* and *Good*. These are *Universally* received by all Christian Churches that now are or ever were in the World, being the very same you find summ'd up in the Apostles Creed. Thus are we at *Unity* with the truly Catholick Church; and thus whilst our Ministers Preach the very same Doctrine, use the same Worship and Sacraments which the Apostles did, they are in that respect truly their Successors. Yea beside this, those Bishops of our Church whom God made use of for the Reformation of it, did receive their Orders from those who were of the Church of *Rome*, so that if their Ordination be vaild, so is ours; if they have a succession from the Apostles, so have we: To say nothing of what is commonly related in History, that some of the Apostles or Apostolical men sent by them, first planted Christianity in these parts, from which time it was never utterly rooted out. But I think I need add nothing more on this Head, having already said so much in another place.

L. *No, Sir, but rather proceed to the fourth Argument.*

T.

T. It is this, *That Church is to be heard which takes the narrow way that leads to Life,* (Matt. 7.) *but the* Roman *Church takes it, and therefore she is to be heard.* And this he proves, *because she takes* (as he says) *not only the way of Gods commands, but also the narrow way of Christs Counsels.* What say you to this?

L. Even the same in effect that you lately said upon the former Argument, viz. *that supposing it to be true that the Church of* Rome *does take this narrow way, yet it is not she alone that takes it, and therefore there is no necessity that I should renounce all other Churches for Communion with her. I am sure there is no reason why I should on this account forsake our own Church, wherein the precepts of Christ are most plainly taught and strictly urged upon the people; and in the very same way to Heaven are we daily exhorted to walk, in which our blessed Saviour and his Apostles have led us by their Example as well as Doctrine, even the way of Piety, Righteousness and serious Holiness.*

T. Your answer is solid and true.

L. But I have yet somewhat more to say against his Argument, and do directly deny that their Church takes the same way to Salvation in all things which our Saviour hath proposed in his Gospel. For whatever he talks of their following, not only his commands but his counsels, yet sure I am that their Church requires many things to be believed and done in order to Salvation, which our Blessed Saviour never commanded, counsel'd or taught; and therefore in these things they do not take the way of the Gospel, but one of their own devising. For in the Gospel we no where find that a Man cannot be saved, except he acknowledg the Popes Supremacy, believe Transubstantiation, worship Images, &c. These things, I think, are directly contrary to the Doctrines and Precepts of the Gospel, and yet these, with many more of like nature, are required in the Roman *Church with all strictness imaginable, in doing of which, she takes not the way of the Gospel, nor therefore in this ought she to be heard.*

T. Most certainly she ought not. But you have all the reason in the World to remain fixed in communion with your own Church, which requires nothing to be believed or practised as of necessity to Salvation, but what is revealed in the Holy Scriptures. Herein following the direction which our Saviour gave to his Apostles, and in them to their Successors, *Matt.* 28. *ult.* that they should *teach the people to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them*; and whoso doth these things shall certainly be saved.

L. *We have no reason to doubt it, since our* Lord Jesus is the Author of eternal Salvation to all that obey him, *But pray what means this Writer by his distinction betwixt the commands and the counsels of our Saviour?*

T. As to that, you must know there are some eminent instances of Piety and Zeal, which are not expresly enjoyned in the Gospel to all men upon condition of Salvation, but rather are recommended by our Blessed Saviour to some particular persons in circumstances proper for them, to such as being enflamed with great love, and furnished with peculiar advantages and larger measures of grace, are able to perform them. Such for instance is that about living a single life, in order to our greater freedom in God's Service, which is stiled, making our selves *Eunuchs for the Kingdom of God.* Now this is not absolutely commanded, but rather, I say, recommended to such as can both live chastly in a single state, and also are capable, all circumstances considered, of doing God most service in that state. And this I reckon is left to every mans own prudence to determine. Wherefore some Learned men of our own Church as well as the *Romish*, do call this a Counsel rather than a Command. Since he that Marries, sins not, and yet he that forbears to Marry in order to God's Glory and the interest of Religion, does hereby express his virtue

tue and zeal in a more eminent degree: And therefore according to that of St. *Paul*, though *he that Marries does well, yet he that* in this caſe *Marries not does better.* And I find ſome that look on this as the only inſtance of a Councel diſtinct from a Command: but the *Romaniſts* add more, as particularly that of voluntary poverty from the words of our Saviour to the young Man, *If thou wilt be perfect, ſell all that thou haſt and give it to the poor*, &c. What was there commanded to this particular perſon, they call a Counſel to others, though for what reaſon I know not.

L. *But wherein does it appear that their Church takes the way of theſe Counſels more than other Chriſtians?*

T. They pretend to do it above others, becauſe they ſtrictly forbid their Clergy to marry, and do mightily cry up a ſingle life as a ſtate of great perfection. And for this end they have Monaſteries and Nunneries, into which multitudes of men and women enter, and withdrawing themſelves from common converſation and buſineſs, do vow to live a ſingle life all their days. Theſe people they call the *Religious*, as if Religion conſiſted in running out of the world rather than in abſtaining from the evil of it. Of theſe they have ſeveral Orders, and moſt of them vow poverty as well as chaſtity. They renounce all propriety in worldly goods, and ſome of them live by begging. Though commonly this is a meer cheat; for many of theſe Orders have vaſt riches among them in common, though none of them can lay claim to a ſingle ſhare for himſelf. Yea all their loud talk of ſanctity and ſtrictneſs above others is meer pretence and proud boaſting, as I have formerly ſhewn you. Whilſt they pretend to follow Chriſts counſels, they do in many things break his plain commands, as even now you obſerved. Like the Phariſees of old, who whilſt they were very zealous for their *own traditions, made void the*

commandments of God. In some things they make the way to Heaven narrower than Christ himself hath done, but in others they take that liberty which he never gave them, and afford men hopes of salvation on easier terms than the Gospel will warrant, as is evident in their Doctrine of Attrition before mention'd. Even this their strictness in enjoyning a single life to all Clergy-men, is an occasion of great looseness. And by this means whoredom it self, which God hath so severely forbidden, is counted a less crime and dishonour in men of that Order than Marriage, which their Church condemns tho' God allows it, nay and this openly maintain'd by some of their stricter Writers. But I wonder who gave their Church Authority to turn Christs councel (allowing that distinction) into a command to any one Order of men. Indeed our Blessed Saviour has given neither command nor councel to Clergy-men more than others to abstain from Marriage. Some of the Apostles had Wives, St. *Peter* amongst the rest, as we find *Matt.* 8. 14. St. *Paul* tells us it was lawful for him to marry also, as well as St. *Peter* and other Apostles, 1 *Cor.* 9. 5. And amongst other qualifications of a Bishop (1 *Tim.* 3. 2 *Tit.* 1. 6.) you find mention made of his wife and children, without the least intimation that this was either unlawful or indecent. And for some ages after the Apostles, the Marriage of Clergy men was commonly allow'd. Some of the Fathers it's true do mightily extol perpetual Virginity, and seem less favourable to Marriage than they have any just ground for; since there is nothing that can be alledged either from Scripture or Reason which may reflect the least dishonour upon chast Marriage in any sort of men whatever; for it was instituted in the time of mans innocency, was allow'd to the Priests under the Law, and is said in the times of the Gospel to be *honourable in all men*, without

out exception of one or other. But the truth is, as matters are now managed in the Church of *Rome*, which in the way of worldly subtilty and cunning is very wise in her generation, this restraint of the Clergy from marrying is a piece of singular policy, tending mightily to advance the wealth and power of their Church; and renders the Clergy less dependant upon Princes, and consequently more intirely at the Popes pleasure. But waving these crafty contrivances, and all vain pretences to a strictness greater than the Gospel requires; our Church, as I have before told you, doth plainly and honestly propose the same way to salvation which our Blessed Saviour himself hath done, even the way of repentance, faith and uniform obedience to all his commands. She requires all men whether married or single to live in strict purity and chastity, which will render the Marriage-bed undefiled; but then whether of these states they will chuse, she leaves all sorts of men to their own liberty, as our Saviour has done. She exhorts and enjoyns all men to be true to their Baptismal Vow, in which they renounced the world with its pomps and vanities; but does not call them to enter into any Monastick vows, nor perswade them to leave their friends, their families and employments, to run into holes and corners, there to tell over their prayers by their Beads, and live in ease and idleness by the sweat of other mens brows; or going about to beg whilst they ought rather to work with their hands, that they themselves might be able to give to those that need. She earnestly presses all men to endeavour after perfection in every grace and vertue, and especially to be much in works of mercy and charity; but yet she does not fright people with stories of Purgatory to bring in their wealth to the Church, nor teach them that there is any great perfection in leaving their honest callings

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to run into a Monastery, bringing their riches along with them thither. She requires constant temperance and sobriety, and sometimes imposes fasting and abstience; but then whether men eat a little flesh or fish, oyl or butter, she thinks it not a matter of the least moment, but leaves all men to their own choice and prudence. In a word, she does not with the Pharisee teach for doctrines the commands of men, but diligently inculcates the expres commandments of Almighty God, delivered to us in his holy Word. And tho' she would not have us so fooliſh and proud as to think of meriting Heaven by our own good works, yet she teaches that upon our *patient continuance in well doing*, we shall through the mercies of God, and the merits of Christ, certainly obtain eternal life; but upon no other terms does she encourage any man to hope for it. And thus you see how our Church teaches us to take that same safe and narrow, but sweet and pleasant way to salvation, which is proposed to us in the Gospel.

L. *I am fully perswaded she does so; God grant me grace ever to walk in this holy way, and then I shall not doubt of an happy end. Pray proceed to his last argument.*

T. I shall so, and this it is, *That Church is not to be heard which has no solid reason for her keeping the Sabbath-day on the day she does keep it; but no Church or Congregation of Sectaries has this, and therefore none of them ought to be heard. What say you to this?*

L. *I say that we of the Church of* England (*whom he unjustly calls Sectaries*) *have good reason for our keeping the Sabbath on that day we do keep it; even as good reason as the Church of* Rome *it self has.*

T. He goes on to prove the contrary thus, *No Church of Sectaries has Scripture for keeping the Sabbath-day on Sunday, and no longer on Saturday as God commanded it, and yet they reject tradition upon which ground the* Roman *Church keeps the Sunday in lieu of Saturday, and there-*

therefore they have no solid reason for what they do, &c.

A.. I answer, we have Scripture for keeping one day in seven, viz. the fourth Commandment. And we read that after our Saviours Resurrection, the Apostles and Disciples commonly assembled together on the first day of the week, which is called the Lords day, Revel. 1. 10. *And then we have tradition to assure us that this day was observed by the Christian Church ever since, which tradition we may plead for our practice I trow, as well as the Church of* Rome.

T. Yes certainly we may; for though we reject a great many ill things which they would thrust upon us for old traditions (many of them being meer novelties of their own devising) yet we do by no means reject such traditions as have sufficient evidence of their having been generally received by all Christian Churches, from the very times of the Apostles down to our days; and of this nature do learned men generally affirm the observation of the Lords-day to be. And what you alledge from Scripture may very well serve to recommend to us so ancient and general a practice. To all this, besides the great equity and reasonableness of the thing in it self, you may add the authority of those whom God hath set over us in Church and State: all which being put together, (leaving the nice disputes that have been about this matter) is a sufficient ground for our observation of the first day of the week as a Christian Sabbath, a day of rest from our common employments, devoted to the more solemn worship and service of God both in publick and private. As solid reason therefore do we give for our practice herein as the Church of *Rome* it self can do, or any other Church in the world.

And thus we have done with his five mighty arguments, in which upon a little examination, there appears nothing of strength or solidity. He next musters

sters up some weighty objections, as he reckons them, against those whom he calls Sectaries, which he says ought to make them very much doubt whether they be secure in the way they are in. And here, according to his usual vain way of bragging, he makes this large offer (which yet he will never make good) that all Priests, Jesuits and Catholicks over all the world will turn to their way, if they can but get from their Ministers a clear and satisfactory resolution of the following doubts.

L. *It was cunningly done of him to call for a* satisfactory *resolution: since though it be as clear as the light at noon day, yet they may still pretend that it is not satisfactory.*

T. They may so, tho' I question not but it will appear such to all that are impartial and judicious. These doubts I shall propose to you in order, and hear what you your self can say for the resolving of them.

L. *I shall give in the best answers I am able, and where I am at a loss shall still desire your help.*

CHAP. II.

A resolution of some doubts and questions proposed to Protestants.

T. FIrst he demands *whether it can be clearly shown, that our Ministers were sent by Almighty God to preach, and to reform the* Roman *Catholick Church, or whether they are not some of the false Prophets who say, The Lord saith, when the Lord hath not sent them,* Ezek. 13. 6.

L. *There seems no great difficulty in resolving this doubt, since our Ministers had lawful Ordination, and thereby had authority to preach the Word of God. And by*

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the light of this word they diſcovered many errors and abuſes in the Roman *Church, wherewith we were foully polluted, and by Gods bleſſing, and the aſſiſtance of lawful authority, they were very inſtrumental in reforming us from the ſame. Now whilſt they proved their Doctrine by this word of God, they are not to be compared to thoſe falſe Prophets who taught the people lies and vanity, as we have it,* Ezek. 13. 7, 8.

T. Your anſwer is ſufficient and very clear. For ſince our firſt Reformers did not publiſh a new Religion, but rather reſtored the old, by removing thoſe corrupt additions that had been made to it, they did not need any extraordinary commiſſion from Heaven, ſuch as *Moſes* had from God when he delivered the Law, and as the Apoſtles had from Jeſus Chriſt, when they were firſt ſent to preach the Goſpel. But it was ſufficient that they were duly qualified by Gods Spirit for the work of the Miniſtry, and were lawfully called to it by thoſe who had authority in the Church to ordain them to that office. Such as theſe are truly ſaid to be ſent of God, and are therefore bound in the execution of this their Office, to do what belongs to it, for the rectifying of mens errors, and reforming them from all evil and corrupt practices, whether in the worſhip of God, or in their common converſation. And thus did thoſe holy and learned men, both Biſhops and others, behave themſelves, who were the bleſſed inſtruments of reforming the Church of *England* from Popery. For the carrying on of which good work, God inclined the hearts of our Kings to employ their power for the aſſiſtance and encouragement of the Clergy who were engaged in it. And herein they did no other than what *Hezekiah*, *Joſiah*, and other pious Kings amongſt the *Jews* did in reforming the *Jewiſh* Church. And as they needed no new commiſſion from Heaven then for the reformation

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they wrought, having the Law of God to be their rule and warrant, no more did our Kings and Bishops whilst they had the Gospel to be theirs according to which they proceeded by degrees. Thus in the first place King *Henry* the Eighth abolished the Popes Supremacy, that great fundamental falshood of Popery, whilst he retain'd in a manner all other points of it. But with great courage and justice he delivered his Kingdom from that yoke of bondage under which the Nation had long groaned, even from the Usurpation of the *Roman* Bishop, declaring that he had no manner of power or jurisdiction in his Majestie's Dominions; but that the King himself, next under God and his Christ, is Head of this Church, that is, the Supreme Moderator and Governour over all persons, and in all causes, as well Ecclesiastical as Civil, in these his Realms. Wherefore the King, with the advice and assistance of his Bishops and Clergy, may as lawfully take care for the Reformation of the Church according to the Word of God, within his own dominions, as the Kings of *Israel* or *Judah* might do in theirs. Yea, he is obliged to do it, and no foreign Power, Prince or Prelate hath any the least right to hinder and controul him herein: Not the Bishop of *Rome* any more than he of *Jerusalem* or *Antioch*. And thus far the generality of the Popish Clergy, both the Bishops and the Universities concurr'd with the King, even such men as *Bonner* and *Gardiner*. The Popes power being thus broken and abolished, this made way for a more thorow Reformation of the Doctrine and worship from many foul errors and superstitions in the days of *Edward* the Sixth. This was for a while interrupted in the reign of Queen *Mary*, but was afterward restored and perfected by the authority of Queen *Elizabeth*, of blessed memory, soon after her entrance upon the Government. And thus was the Refor-

Reformation of our Church, according to the rule of Gods holy Word, moſt happily begun, carried on and compleated, in a peaceable, orderly and deliberate manner, by juſt and lawful authority, even that of the whole Kingdom whether Eccleſiaſtical or Civil. Of which you have an account at large in a late accurate and full Hiſtory of our Reformation by a Learned hand; an Abridgement whereof is done by the ſame Author in a little room, if the Hiſtory it ſelf be too large for you. Our firſt Reformers then were no Impoſtors or falſe Prophets, but were indeed ſent of God, tho' in an ordinary way, being rightly Ordained to the Miniſtry, and duly qualified for that Sacred Office; they were guided and directed by the plain Word of God, own'd and ſucceeded by his Providence, allow'd and encouraged by his Vicegerents our Kings and Queens; and the Reformation at length peaceably and firmly eſtabliſhed by the Laws of the Land

L. *This doubt, I think, is clearly enough reſolved, and to me very ſatisfactorily. Pray what's the next?*

T. He asks whether it can be made good what Luther *and* Calvin, *with all* Proteſtants *and* Presbyterians *have ſo long boaſted they could do,* viz. *Reform convincingly any one of the ſilliest* Roman *Catholicks that is: and to begin, let them do it in the matter of the Real Preſence.*

L. *I do not well underſtand what he means by this. For I think there is no queſtion to be made of it, but* Luther *and* Calvin (*tho' they were not the Reformers of our Church*) *with other learned Proteſtants have convincingly reformed many that were* Roman *Catholicks: and in the matter of the Real Preſence, as well as other points, theſe Converts have been convinced of their error, and brought to a ſounder judgment agreeable to Scripture and reaſon.*

T. I think indeed there is more difficulty in finding out the meaning of this queſtion than in anſwering it, tho'

tho' somewhat like it he had before. He cannot surely mean that no people who once profest themselves *Roman* Catholicks (as his phrase is) have ever been convinced of the errors of the *Roman* Church so as to forsake the same: thus it hath been with some whole Nations, and particularly our own. For we grant that in these latter ages our people were generally infected with those errors, tho' from the beginning it was not so. And as to *Luther* and *Calvin*, tho' they did great service for the Reforming of the Church in their own Countries, yet neither they nor any *Presbyterians* were the chief instruments of that work among us, but holy Bishops, and many sound and orthodox Preachers ordain'd by them, who taught the truth as it is in Jesus, and sealed with their blood the truth of what they taught. These men by their zealous Preaching, their holy living, and chearful dying, (after the example of the Apostles and other Martyrs in the Primitive times) did by Gods blessing win over thousands to embrace the Doctrine of the Gospel in its native purity, rejecting those Popish errors in which before they had been blindly train'd up. Wherefore he might as well say that the Apostles never converted any from Heathenism to Christianity, as that our Ministers have never reformed any from Popery. What then can he mean? I can scarce guess what, except that they cannot reform a Papist whilst he still remains one; which is as if we should say that the Apostles never converted any Heathens, because whilst they remain'd Heathens they were not converted. But I am not willing to think him so weak and silly, and therefore till he speaks plainer shall trouble my self no more with this, but proceed to his next question, which runs thus, *Can you prove to me clearly out of the written word (which you teach ought only to be follow'd as the guide to Heaven) that the Sabbath-day is commanded by God to be kept on*

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Sunday, and that little children are to be baptized?

L. *Part of this was mention'd before,* viz. *that about keeping the Sabbath, for which you shew'd there is enough from Scripture to warrant our practice, besides the constant custom of the whole Christian Church ever since the Primitive times, and I suppose the same may be said for the Baptism of Infants.*

T. I judge it may, and that upon very good grounds! For we know that Children were admitted members of the *Jewish* Church by the solemn rite of Circumcision; and since our Saviour hath no where given the least intimation that this privilege should be taken from them, I can see no reason why the children of Christian Parents may not be solemnly consecrated to God by Baptism, and so admitted members of the Christian Church. And (to omit many other Texts which speak in favour of infants) this without any wresting of the words, may be fairly drawn from that commission given to the Apostles and their Successors, *Matt.* 28. 19. *Go ye therefore and teach* (or disciple) *all Nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.* They were to make Disciples of whole Nations, which surely comprehends both Parents and Children. First, the Parents were to be instructed in the Christian Faith, and upon their profession of it to be baptized. And then they themselves being devoted to God, and entred into covenant with him, since Parents have power over their Children to dispose of them for their good, and to lay engagements on them for that end, surely it was lawful for them to devote their children also to God, and to enter them into covenant with him by baptism, thereby laying a strict obligation upon them, when they come to years of discretion, to perform their part of this holy covenant if ever they

hope for any benefit by it; the Parents also being bound to acquaint their children with their duty so soon as they are capable of learning it. Thus when any one from among the Heathens became a proselyte to the *Jews*, when he himself was circumcised, so were his children also. Yea learned men tell us that it was also the custom to wash these proselytes in pure water, and that very probably our Saviour was pleased to accomodate himself to this same usage of theirs; in his instituting of Baptism for the more solemn admission of members into his Church. Now (as an excellent Writer argues) suppose that our Blessed Saviour instead of the word *Baptizing* should have used that of *circumcising*, and have said, *Go teach all Nations*, circumcising *them in the name*, &c. would not all men have been apt to think that the same priviledg which the *Jews* had of admitting their children into Covenant by Circumcision, that Christian Parents also should have the like? why then may not the same be reasonably argued from the words, though Baptism be here named, and not Circumcision? Very probable it is that the Apostles thus understood it, and that they practised accordingly, when we read of their Baptizing such and such persons and their households, as *Act.* 16. 15, 33. amongst whom there might be some children for any thing that can be shewn to the contrary. And certain we are that very early in the Christian Church infants were admitted to Baptism, and thence hath it continued to this day to be the general custom of all Churches throughout the world. And pray take good notice that though our Church allows nothing to be imposed upon our belief or practice as necessary to Salvation, but what is contain'd in Gods holy Word, yet she hath great regard to antiquity, to the customs of the truly Catholick Church, and the current Doctrine of the Fathers, and requires

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Ministers to have due respect thereto in their Exposition of Scripture. And therefore, without any Contradiction to her self, may very well admit the observation of such customs, that having so much ground from Scripture, are recommended also by the early and general practice of the Christian Church. This, I say, she may very well do, but is by no means thereby obliged to receive all the traditions and customs of the *Roman* Church, for many of which nothing can be truly pleaded either from Scripture or Antiquity, but very much against them from both.

L. *This is very plain and satisfactory. Pray let us have his next question.*

T. It is this: *Can you make it appear to me how your Sectaries can with reason and sufficient ground condemn all the Catholicks that were so many Ages before* Luther *and* Calvin, *for being no better than Heathens, and convince me that by adhering to you I shall be more secure of my Salvation, than if I joyn my self to them that have been held time out of mind, in most parts of the World, for the men that have the true and only saving Religion?* What answer give you to this?

L. *First I know no body that does thus condemn all Catholicks before* Luther *and* Calvin. *For as to those Christians in the first ages of the Church, who truly deserve the name of Catholicks, whether of the* Roman *Church or any other, we are so far from condemning, that we admire and applaud them; we approve of their Doctrine contain'd in the ancient Creeds, and do imbrace and profess it; we honour their memory, and endeavour to imitate their example. But as to those of the* Roman *Church in latter ages (whom he means, I suppose, by his Catholick) tho' we do not say they are as bad as Heathens, yet we do truly say that they have very much corrupted Christian Religion by false Doctrines and Superstitious usages: and therefore we think it a much safer way to salvation, to adhere to the ancient,*

certain truths of Christianity every where received, and to worship God in that pure and holy manner which our Blessed Saviour and his Apostles both taught and used, than to embrace those additions made by the Roman *Church, which are no parts of true and saving Religion, nor have ever been so accounted by the generality of Christians. And though our Ancestors might have some excuse from the state of this Church in their days, yet we their posterity should be utterly inexcusable, if now that our Church has so justly reformed her self from Popish corruptions, we should break off from her communion, and go over to the Church of* Rome *that hates to be reformed. This were to add the guilt of Schism to that of Superstition.*

T. Your answer is very clear and full, and may well enough serve for the solution of his fifth Query, which is to the same purpose with the former, *viz. Can you make evident at least that in your little flock, or in* Luther *and* Calvin *their Guides, more holiness and virtue was to be found than in the Catholicks? And that it is this little flock of yours, not the Catholicks, that go the narrow way that leads to life?*

L. *To this may easily be answered, as you have formerly instructed me, that tho'* Luther *and* Calvin *were learned and good men, who in their own times and places did much service for the Reformation of Religion, yet they never had authority in our Church, nor do we own them as our guides. The blessed Jesus is the Author of our Religion; and after him the holy Apostles were the teachers of it, being no other than Christianity it self, and consequently the true way to eternal happiness; even that narrow way of truth and holiness, which the whole flock of Christ in all ages hath acknowledged and walked in. But the Church of* Rome *(which may well enough be stiled the Popes little flock, hath peculiar Doctrines of its own, which she hath added to the common truths of Christianity, many of which Doctrines do apparently lead men to the broad way, even to*

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looſneſs of life and manners, as hath been already ſhewn.

T. There needs nothing more be added to what you ſay, and therefore I ſhall proceed to his ſixth and laſt queſtion, *viz. Can you ſhew me any miracles that ever were wrought in teſtimony of the truth of your Religion? Or that all the miracles which Catholicks ſhew to have been done in confirmation of their Religion, have been falſe, or were wrought by Beelzebub, any more than thoſe which Chriſt did work in his life time?*

L. I do well remember the anſwer that long ſince you gave to this, the ſumm of which was, that ſince our Religion is that ſame holy Chriſtian Religion which was taught by our Bleſſed Saviour and his Apoſtles, all thoſe miracles which they anciently wrought in confirmation of their Doctrine, do at this day confirm ours alſo, wich being the ſame with theirs, needs no new miracles for that purpoſe. For by thoſe miracles of theirs (beſides other weighty arguments) we are fully aſſured that Jeſus Chriſt is the Son of God, that he died for our ſins, and roſe again from the dead, with the reſt of the Creed, wherein is briefly comprized the ſumm of our Belief, the chief articles of our Religion. And when our firſt Reformers rejected thoſe Popiſh errors which had been added to theſe ancient Chriſtian Doctrines, as they needed no extraordinary commiſſion for this their reformation, no more did they need any miracles to confirm their commiſſion. It was enough that they had authority from God, from the Church, and from their Prince, to preach the truths of the Goſpel, and to reject all errors contrary thereto, and to remove thoſe abuſes which in latter times had crept into the Church. But whilſt they only preach'd that ſame Goſpel, which had been abundantly confirmed already by mighty ſigns and wonders, they no more needed any new miracles, than if ſuch errors and abuſes had never been brought in. And as to thoſe falſe Doctrines wherein Popery conſiſts, ſuch as the Popes Supremacy, Tranſubſtantiation, &c. we do utterly deny that ever any

true miracles were wrought in confirmation of them, whatever fine tales their Monks may tell us in their Legends. And for any to compare these their lying Legends, (so full of most ridiculous and prodigious stories) with the account that is given of the miracles done by our Saviour and his followers in the New Testament, is to be guilty of notorious impudence and blasphemy, and plainly tends to promote Infidelity and Atheism.

T. Your censure is very just, and your answer solid and satisfactory, as are the rest you have given. By all which it appears that your Author had little cause to say, *that they who ask the resolution of these doubts from their Ministers, if they have any light of reason, will find how much they are deluded.* For blessed be God, I hope many of our people are so well instructed, that they will not be imposed upon, nor much puzled with such captious Questions as these. Especially whilst they seek to their Ministers for a Resolution of their doubts, by the Grace of God they shall be secured from the delusions of Popish Emissaries, who go about seeking whom they may deceive.

CHAP. III.

An Answer to some Propositions said to be Unanswerable by Protestants.

T. IN the next place I find your Author, at his Scholars request, furnishing him with some *unanswerable Propositions*, (as he vainly stiles them) against Protestants. Of these he names eight, taken, as he says, from *Costerus* the Jesuit, who therewith (if we may believe him) put all the ablest Ministers of *Germany* and the *Low-Countries* to their wits end. Which if it were so, one would wonder that there were any Protestant Ministers or People left in those Countries, and that they were not all long since driven out of their

their wits and their Religion into Popery. But had they never uſed thoſe terrible arguments of fire and ſword, Priſons and Inquiſition, no body would much fear their pregnant argumen s, difficult queſtions, or unanſwerable Propoſitions. The two former we have already diſpatched, let us now ſurvey the laſt, in which I am apt to think we ſhall ſtill find a tedious repetition of many the ſame things that we have already often heard; which if it be ſo, we ſhall more briefly paſs over them.

L. *Probably you will find it ſo. However I think we ſhall ſooner have finiſhed, if you pleaſe to give the anſwer your ſelf to theſe his propoſitions which I ſhall exactly recite to you.*

T. That ſhall be as you will: But I hope you are not moved with his formidable title of *Unanſwerable Propoſitions.*

L. *I have no reaſon I am ſure, if they be like his unanſwerable Queſtions, in which there proved little or no difficulty.*

T. Their common way is to make up the want of good Reaſon with great words and loud noiſe; producing only thin fallacies and empty ſophiſtry, whilſt they talk big of Infallible Evidence and clear Demonſtration. But let us hear theſe dreadful Propoſitions I beſeech you.

L. His firſt is this, *Never ſince the Apoſtles times, till* Luther *began his new Doctrine in the year* 1517. *was any man found in the whole World, who did in all things conſent with either* Lutherans, Calviniſts, Anabaptiſts, *or other Sectaries opinions. Nor ſhall ever any of the Sectaries prove the Apoſtles or Evangeliſts to have been of the* Lutheran, Calviniſtical, *or any other new Sect. Whence follows, that* Luther *and the reſt have no Faith at all, but only a new fancied invention, which they adorn with the name of Faith. And that they are the men of whom the Scrip-*

ture in several places affirms that there will come in the latter times false Prophets.

T. As to *Lutherans* or *Calvinists*, we own neither one name or other (as has been often said) nor are we concerned to vindicate any particular opinion of this Man or that; though I reckon the Doctrine of both, as to the substance of it, to be sound and good, at least so far as it agrees with that of our Church, which only we are obliged to answer for, and easily we may (though he revile us also as Sectaries) since it is no other than the same Christian Doctrine which is contain'd in the Gospel, and summ'd up in the Creed; and this let him confute if he can, or attempt it if he dare. And in this Doctrine we are sure both the Apostles of old, with the Catholick Church in their age, and in all ages since, do fully consent with us. Nor was it any new Doctrine that our Reformers brought in. No, but whilst they rejected Popish Novelties, they retain'd those truths of Christianity which were as old as the first institution of Religion. What means he then by saying that none of the Ancients consent with us in all things? In every little opinion it's scarce likely there were or ever will be two men in the World that do exactly agree. No such agreement I am sure is to be found amongst the Divines of the *Roman* Church. But as sure it is that we agree with the Apostles and ancient Churches in all things material and substantial, in all points of Faith necessary to Salvation. For we embrace the same Holy Scriptures and the same Creeds which they did. What means he again by saying that the Apostles were not of the *Lutheran* or *Calvinistical* Sect? What, that they were not followers of *Luther* or *Calvin*? They were not like indeed; but it's enough, I hope, if *Luther* and *Calvin* were followers of the Apostles. Thus, what if he should say that the Apostles were not of the

the Church of *England*? Is it not ſufficient that our Church embraces the ſame Faith which the Apoſtles planted in all places where they came? Wherefore we may with great reaſon conclude, contrary to his extravagant and moſt uncharitable inferences, that we have the true Chriſtian Faith in our Church, and not any new-fangled invention, *&c.* If the Apoſtles Creed be a Summary of the true Faith, I am ſure we have it, ſince we do moſt heartily embrace this Creed and thoſe Holy Scriptures whence it's taken, and therefore we are none of thoſe falſe Prophets foretold in Scripture: For whilſt we keep cloſe to God's word as the rule of our Faith, we are ſafe enough from deſerving any ſuch charge. But how will they of the *Romiſh* Church acquit themſelves from it, whilſt they have brought in many devices of their own, to which the Apoſtles and Primitive Chriſtians were meer ſtrangers, and therefore cannot be ſaid to conſent with *Papiſts* therein? Such are their Doctrines of Purgatory, Tranſubſtantiation, *&c.* ſuch are their cuſtoms of praying in an unknown Tongue; having private Maſſes where the Prieſt only receives in their publick Aſſemblies; their half-communions, giving only the Bread to the people when they do Communicate, *&c.* None of theſe things were anciently taught or uſed in the Church, and ſome of them but lately eſtabliſhed amongſt themſelves. Theſe therefore we may juſtly ſay are new-fangled inventions, deviſed of their own Brain, contrary to Holy Scriptures: And they who broach and maintain them are in this reſpect falſe Teachers, and probably ſome of thoſe who are foretold in Scripture; at leaſt they and their falſe Doctrines are condemned by it, and that's enough for our purpoſe.

L. *It is ſo indeed; and enough have you ſaid to weaken and refute this his firſt Propoſition. If the reſt have no*

more strength, they are far from deserving that great title he gives them. I shall rehearse the next if you please.

T. Presently you shall, only take notice from what hath been said, how plain the Answer is to that captious Question of theirs, *Where was your Religion before* Luther? Where was it? Even there wherever the Gospel was received; wherever the Christian Doctrine was own'd: for that is our Religion, and nothing but that. It was therefore in the Primitive Church that was planted by the Apostles; and in the whole Catholick Church in all succeeding Ages. Our Religion was both in the *East* and *West*, even in the *Roman* Church it self. For we grant they still retain'd the Christian Faith; they kept, and do still keep the Apostles Creed, tho' they have added several new Articles to it, and that especially in their Council of *Trent*, which appear'd not in the World quite so soon as *Luther*. Now, the truly Catholick, Ancient, Christian Faith we receive; but their new coin'd Articles we reject: So that before the Reformation, our Religion was in their Church as Gold in a heap of Dirt, or (as one long since expresst it) as the pure Flower amongst the Bran, or as Corn among Tares. And by the Reformation we only wash'd away this Dirt, sifted out the Bran and plucked up the Tares: But the old Religion, the Doctrine of Christ and his Apostles remains pure and intire.

L. *But say they, where did the Apostles teach that there is no Purgatory, no Transubstantiation,* &c. *Yet thus the* Protestants *teach, and therefore they consent not with the Apostles.*

T. Yes certainly but they do; for (as I have formerly told you) we therefore say there is no Purgatory, *&c.* because the Apostles say no such things, which be sure they would have done, had they been true, since they are such weighty and material points as the Church of *Rome* now accounts them. What

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the Apoſtles taught that we receive; what they taught not we refuſe, as knowing they were faithful in delivering all that they received of the Lord. Judge then which of us conſents moſt with the Apoſtles, we who receive all their Doctrines, but reject what they never taught, or they who teach theſe new Doctrines, which neither the Apoſtles nor any of their firſt followers ever delivered, nor were they for ſome Hundred years after generally profeſt ſo much as in their own Church. Yea, theſe Novelties were never directly and formally eſtabliſhed as Articles of Faith, and made neceſſary for all men of their Communion to believe till in theſe latter Ages; ſome of them, as I take it, not till the very Council of *Trent* (not yet an Hundred and fifty years ſince) which they call a General Council, tho' packt up of Biſhops of their own Sect; and the major part the Popes own creatures, who uſed all the foul arts imaginable to carry things according to his humour, as is plainly to be ſeen in the Hiſtory of that Council, written by ſome of their own Church. Now in reſpect of theſe Articles in which Popery chiefly conſiſts, we may with great reaſon retort the queſtion, and demand, Where was your Religion before the Council of *Trent*? And were the Apoſtles of the ſame opinion with theſe *Trent* Fathers? Compare their Creeds together, and it will eaſily appear. Yea, compare that of *Trent* with any other of the old Creeds, ſuch as the *Nicene* or *Conſtantinopolitan*, and it will eaſily appear what additions they have made to the ancient Faith; whereas our Church receives thoſe very ſame Creeds, without addition or diminution. To conclude this, tho' we readily grant their Popiſh Errors to have been before our Reformation from them (for they could not be caſt out before they were brought in) yet the great truths of our Religion were taught and received in the Church, ſome Ages before

those Errors were ever heard of. Our Religion then did not first appear in *Luther*'s days, when the Reformation was wrought, but is as old as since the time of Christ and his Apostles, being nothing else but pure Christianity reformed from the errors and abuses of *Popery*. These things I have already oft mentioned, but could not well avoid the repetition of them, on occasion of this his first Proposition, which by this time you see is far enough from being unanswerable: Now let us hear the second.

L. *It cannot be proved that the Religion and Faith of the Holy* Roman *Catholick Church hath been any way changed in any Article that belongs to the Religion, by any Pope, Council, or Catholick Bishop: nor can any of them be produced that have changed it. But it is rather proved that the very same Faith hath remain'd intire and inviolate from the times of the Apostles to this very day, and by continual succession (or from hand to hand, as it were) is come to our hands. Whence is manifestly gathered, that it is the very same Faith which the Apostles taught, and therefore the same that they learned from Christ their Master in his School.*

T. The Answer which I have just now given to his first Proposition doth wholly take off the force of this second also. For pray consider, we do not charge those of the Church of *Rome*, with directly changing the Articles of the Christian Faith: for we grant they still retain the Apostles Creed, wherein that Faith is briefly comprized, and the Holy Scriptures where it is more largely taught: but our great charge against them is their adding to this old Faith new Articles of their own devising, some of them utterly uncertain, some notoriously false; which yet they impose as of absolute necessity to be believed in order to Salvation, even as much as the Apostles Creed it self. And for the vindication of these Novelties, they give very

corrupt

corrupt and falſe interpretations of the ancient Articles, and of the holy Scriptures themſelves, ſuch as the firſt Chriſtian Writers never gave. Thus for inſtance, they would have the Catholick Church mentioned in the Creed to ſignifie the *Roman* Church, and ſo to comprehend only thoſe who acknowledg the Biſhop of *Rome* to be Head of the Church, and Chriſt's Vicar upon Earth, whereas none of the Ancients did ever thus explain this Article: So that by their corrupt gloſſes they do in ſome inſtances very much change the Doctrine whilſt they retain the Words. But as to theſe novel additions which they would thruſt upon us, we do utterly deny that they were ever taught by Chriſt or his Apoſtles, nor conſequently could be delivered down from them ſucceſſively to this preſent Age. Nay our Learned Writers ſhew as to many of them the very time when they were introduced, by what Degrees and what Arts it was done, and with what difficulties and oppoſitions they met. They name the very Pope who firſt obtain'd the Title of Supreme Biſhop of the Univerſal Church; they name the Council where Image-worſhip was firſt eſtabliſhed; and after that when Tranſubſtantiation and the Popes Power of Depoſing Princes were Decreed, *&c.* Tho' (as our Writers commonly urge) it is a moſt fooliſh and ridiculous thing, when we demonſtrate the Errors of their Church, for them to ſay there are none, becauſe we cannot ſhew the preciſe time when they were firſt brought in. As if when the Tares were plainly ſeen in the field, the Servant ſhould have denied there were any, becauſe no body could exactly tell when they were ſown, it being done while the Maſter ſlept. It's enough that we can tell the time long after the Apoſtles, when their erroneous Doctrines were not received in the Church, and that proves them to be no part of the Ancient Faith of Chriſtians, which has been always

ways and every where received in the Catholick Church. Nay, as to one most corrupt custom of their Church, that of taking the Cup from the Laity, when they first established it by a Decree, *viz.* in the Council of *Constance*, not three hundred years ago, they themselves do there acknowledg that it was permitted in the Primitive Church; yet it now seem'd fit to the Church of *Rome* (for what reason you must not enquire) to order the contrary to that Primitive practice. But to conclude, That faith which indeed the Apostles learn'd in Christ's School, and from him taught to their followers, and which from them hath been transmitted from one age to another down to this present time, this we do most readily own and embrace, even that faith which is delivered in the holy Scriptures, and comprized in the Creed: and so far as they of *Rome* do acknowledg this faith, we have no quarrel with them. But the new Articles decreed by late Councils of their own, by no means can we admit, not a syllable of them being mention'd in the ancient Creeds; nor can they be proved by the Holy Scriptures, but many of them are directly contrary thereto, as hath been already shewn, and will yet further appear in my answer to his following argument, to which you may proceed.

L. His third Proposition is, *That it cannot be shew'd that either the Ceremonies, Sacraments, or any Doctrine of their Church, contains any thing contrary to holy Scripture; but rather their learned Doctors clearly teach and demonstrate all the foresaid things to be plainly consonant to Holy Writ. Such be these Words, This is my Body, and others. Whence it follows, that* Lutherans, Calvinists, *and other Sectaries have ungroundedly and without reason separated themselves from the* Roman *Church: That also they who withdraw themselves from the Catholick Churches bosom, can give no reason why they turn*

rather

rather to the Lutherans, *than to the* Calviniſts, Anabaptiſts, *or ſuch other Hereticks.*

T. That the Church of *Rome* hath brought in Cuſtoms contrary to the Holy Scripture, is very evident from that inſtance I gave under the laſt Head, *viz.* their taking away the Cup from the people at the Communion, contrary to our Saviour's own inſtitution and practice, who gave the Cup as well as the Bread to his Apoſtles, requiring them all to drink of it; and this not as Apoſtles meerly, but as they were his Diſciples. And he enjoyned them to do this hereafter *in remembrance of him*; and conſequently to give both the Bread and the Wine to all Chriſtians that ſhould come to the Lord's Table. And ſo the Apoſtle *Paul* expreſly requires, *Let a man examine himſelf* (every man that is, whether of the Clergy or Laity) *and ſo let him eat of that bread and drink of that Cup.* According to the Apoſtle then, every man that is bound to examine and prepare himſelf for this Holy Sacrament, ought to drink of the Cup as well as eat of the Bread. And thus it was generally uſed in the Primitive Church by their own confeſſion, as you have heard. And yet in theſe latter ages, out of I know not what pretended reverence for the Cup, no body muſt partake of it ordinarily but the Prieſt that conſecrates, which is, I ſay, moſt expreſly contrary to the Scripture. But for their excuſe, they have deviſed forſooth, a fine Doctrine of Concomitancy, which (if you will do them the ſmall favour to grant that of Tranſubſtantiation to be true) they think well enough ſolves all. For they tell you that the Blood ſo accompanies the fleſh, that he who receives one, partakes of the other alſo; and therefore whilſt the people take the fleſh under the ſpecies of Bread, this may very well ſerve without taking the Wine too. But if th s be a good reaſon, Why then need the conſecra-

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ting Priest take the Wine? Or why need our Saviour have appointed both Bread and Wine to be made use of in this his Holy Supper? Here then you have a plain instance of their practising contrary to the Scripture in so weighty a matter as the Administring the Holy Communion.

To this may be joyn'd their custom of private Masses or Communions (if that be not a contradiction) the Priest himself many times receiving alone, and none of the people who are present partaking with him; contrary to the first institution of this Holy Sacrament, and to the very nature and design of it as it is a Communion, and contrary also to the practice of the Primitive Church.

To these may a great many more easily be added, of which we have formerly taken notice: Such as having their Prayers in an unknown Tongue contrary to the Apostles direction, 1 *Cor.* 14. Their Worshipping of Saints and Angels, which is forbidden in all those places that command us to Worship God alone, in the name of Jesus Christ our only Mediator, and most expresly, *Col.* 2. 18. *Rev.* 22. 9. Also their Worship of Images and of the Host, contrary to the second Commandment.

And for an instance of their false Doctrines (many of which we have often mentioned) we need go no further than that palpable one of Transubstantiation, which he mentions as agreeable to Scripture, that says, *This is my body.* But how little these words make for his purpose, we have before shewn, and that their plain meaning is, This is the Sacrament of my Body, or the representation and commemoration of it, and the way of conveying the benefits that come by it; according to the constant use of the like expressions in the matter of Sacraments; even as the Paschal Lamb is called the Passover, of which it was only a solemn

Memorial,

Memorial. But that the natural ſubſtance of Bread (and conſequently of Wine) remains after Conſecration, we have proved from the Apoſtle who again and again calls it ſo, 1 *Cor.* 11. How then can he ſay that without ground we ſeparate from the *Romiſh* Church? Since if there were nothing elſe to be blamed; this alone were ſufficient reaſon to keep out of their Communion, ſince in order to it they require our belief of a Doctrine moſt apparently falſe, namely that of Tranſubſtantiation; and enjoyn a practice founded upon this Doctrine, which is notoriouſly ſinful, *viz.* the Worſhip of the Conſecrated Elements, as if they were now turned into the ſubſtance of Chriſt's Body and Blood; yea, into whole Chriſt, both as to his Divine and Humane Nature. Now they themſelves (as you have heard) do grant that if there was no ſuch change made by Conſecration, this Worſhip would be Idolatrous, and therefore we being upon good grounds aſſured, that no ſuch change there is, do utterly abhor the very thoughts of ſuch Idolatrous worſhip; and do believe our ſelves bound in conſcience to Almighty God, to undergo a Thouſand deaths rather than be guilty of it; yea, though we lived in Popiſh Countries. But beſides this, we here in *England* owe no manner of obedience to the Biſhop of *Rome*, nor are under any obligation to forſake the Communion of our own Church for that of the *Romiſh*; but ſhould be guilty of that hainous ſin of Schiſm by ſo doing, as the *Papiſts* amongſt us are at this day, of which more in another place.

As to what he talks, that they who go from their Church can give no reaſon why they ſhould rather turn to *Luther* than to the *Calviniſts*, &c. it concerns not us in the leaſt, who neither turn to the one or the other; but continue in Communion with our own Church in which we were Baptized; and live in obedience to our

own Rulers in Church and State, whom God hath set over us: Nor do I discern by what reason he makes this silly inference; nor yet for what purpose. But let me hear his next Argument.

L. *It cannot be proved that ever at any time were admitted any Priests that were not first duly consecrated by Bishops: Wherefore we rightly infer, that all* Lutheran *Ministers,* Calvinists, *or any other Sects, not Consecrated according to the old custom of the Holy Church, are far both from the name and reality of the Divine Priesthood; and so that in their Cene or Supper (as they call it) they give but a meer piece of Bread, as also that they have no power to Absolve from Sins, but send away people as intangled and defiled with Sin as they were when they came to them.*

T. As to this Argument, we of the Church of *England* are nothing concerned in it, since our Priests receive Ordination from Bishops, and therefore have as full authority for the exercise of their Ministerial function as those of any Christian Church in the World. Some other Reformed Churches also do embrace Episcopal Government. As for such who want it, we shall not enter into a dispute concerning the validity of their Orders: But this I think we may safely assert, that if the people be duly qualified for the Lord's Supper (as St. *Paul* himself calls it, 1 *Cor.* 11. 20.) by a firm belief of the Gospel, and sincere love and obedience to our Blessed Saviour, they shall not want the benefits that are promised to worthy Communicants, through any defect or irregularity in the Ordination of their Ministers. And if they do truly repent of their sins and forsake them, they shall for Christ's sake obtain forgiveness from God, though never any Priest should give them Absolution. But on the other hand, our Writers have shewn, that according to the common principle received in the *Romish* Church, *That the truth of Sacraments depends upon the intention of the Priest,* the

the people cannot be certain at any time that they have true Sacraments; no, nor whether he be a true Priest that administers them But I shall trouble you with nothing more on this Argument.

L. There is no need, since it reaches not our Church in the least; I shall therefore proceed to the fifth, which is this: *It cannot be found in the whole Holy Scripture, that nothing is to be believed but what clearly and expressly is contained, written in the same; whence follows the ruin and overthrow of the ground work on which* Lutherans, Calvinists, *and other Sectaries rely, when they affirm that nothing is to believed but what is expressly set down in Holy Writ.*

T. I wonder who says so: Every thing is to be believed that has sufficient evidence of its truth, whether it be in Scripture or not. But this we say (and this I suppose he means to argue against) that nothing is of necessity to be believed in order to Salvation, but what is contain'd in Holy Scripture. Which in effect is the same as to say, that the Holy Scripture contains all necessary articles of Faith, so that no Church on Earth has any power to coin and impose new ones not revealed in the Scripture, which, I say, acquaints us with all things needful to Salvation. And this I am sure is plainly enough taught in the Scripture it self, 2 *Tim.* 3. 15, 16, 17. The holy Scriptures they then enjoy'd, *viz.* the Writings of the *Old Testament*, are said to be *able to make him wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus*, being profitable to all things necessary thereto, as you may there find it fully expresst. So Joh. 20. 31. *These things are written that you might believe that Jesus is Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you might have life through his name.* So that if we believe in Jesus Christ according to all that is written of him in the Gospel, this Faith (if it produce Obedience) will certainly procure everlasting Life.

And indeed our own reason may well tell us, that since the very design of the holy Scripture is to reveal to us the whole Will of God in order to our Eternal happiness, surely there is revealed in them all that is necessary to this end. Can we imagine that those holy Men who committed to Writing the Doctrine of our Blessed Saviour, with an account of his Life and Death, his Resurrection and Ascension, *&c.* that they would omit any thing which was necessary for us to know and believe in order to our Salvation, when they wrote these things purposely that we might be saved? Especially if we consider that they have given us a very large account of things, much more than was of absolute necessity; And in such abundance would they leave out things more necessary than those they have Recorded? The necessary Articles of Faith are comprized in a little room, and have generally been thought to be comprehended in the Apostles Creed. This was the judgment of the Primitive Fathers, and many Learned men of the Church of *Rome* have acknowledged as much. Now the Articles of this Creed, I hope, are all contained in the Holy Scripture, being there both largely expreſt, and frequently inculcated. So that the groundwork of the Reformation remains firm and unshaken, *viz.* that the holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation, and therefore those new Articles which the *Roman* Church hath invented besides, yea, contrary to these Scriptures, ought by no means to be admitted.

I. The Doctrine of our Church concerning the sufficiency of Holy Scripture seems very plain, and the inference you make from it clear and natural; But the sixth Argument will give you occasion to discourse further on this subject. For my Author says it will be for confirmation of his former Proposition, and thus it runs; *We would fain have* Luther, Calvin, *and other*

Sectaries

Sectaries ſhew where they find written that the Goſpel according to St. Matthew *is Holy Scripture rather than the Goſpel of* Nicodemus, *which ſeeing they cannot do, and yet they believe to the Goſpel of St.* Matthew *as to Holy Scripture, they muſt needs confeſs that they believe ſome things which are not contain'd in Scripture.*

T. His former Argument truly ſtands in much need of confirmation, but is like to receive little from this which he brings to ſtrengthen and enforce it. Since if we grant him the whole of it, I cannot ſee that it will do any ſervice to his cauſe, or any prejudice to ours: For whoever denied, but that we believe ſome, yea, many things which are not contain'd in holy Scripture? We believe there is ſuch a Countrey as *France*, and ſuch a City in it as *Paris*, though there be nothing of them in Scripture: Or which is nearer to our purpoſe, we believe there was ſuch a Man in the World as *Julius Cæſar*, and that the Book which goes under his name, called, *Cæſar's Commentaries*, was indeed written by him; This we believe on account of the current Tradition and conſtant opinion of the World from his time down to this preſent Age, there being no ground to doubt of the truth of it, ſince all circumſtances concur to render it credible. Even thus, to come to the caſe in hand, we believe the Goſpel according to St. *Matthew*, and the other ſacred books to be written by thoſe perſons whoſe names they bear in the Title as Authors of them, becauſe this hath been the conſtant judgment of the whole Church of God from the very Age wherein theſe books were written, to this preſent time. And on the other hand, we have good reaſon to reject a book pretended to be written by *Nicodemus*, becauſe none ſuch was admitted by the Primitive Church, which muſt needs have known of it if any ſuch book there had been. For this reaſon it was never own'd

as Canonical by the Catholick Church in any Age since; nor therefore do we now receive it as such. Where now I beseech you lies the strength of this his mighty Argument?

L. *I confess I am so far from discerning the strength of it, that I do not well understand what he aims at by it.*

T. I'le tell you then in a few words; He would by his way of arguing force us to acknowledg; that holy Scripture does not contain all things necessary to Salvation; but that there are some Traditions of the Church to be received with equal reverence and esteem, as particularly that such and such Books are Canonical Scripture, others not; and that it is on account of the authority of the Church of *Rome* that these Traditions are to be received; and therefore, lastly, they hence infer that all other Traditions which their Church proposes to us, are by the same reason to be received without doubting or disputing. This is their common way of arguing, and this Author here and in other places insinuates the same. But now to shew further how little of force or solid reason there is in this smooth and subtile talk, pray consider with me seriously two or three things which I shall suggest to you.

L. *I promise you my most diligent attention.*

T. (1.) Then we must ever carefully distinguish betwixt the tradition or delivery of the holy Scripture it self from one generation to another, and those other traditions, whether Doctrines or customs beside the holy Scripture, which yet are by the *Roman* Church made of equal authority with it; the former we own, but not the latter. For, we most readily grant that there hath been a tradition of the holy Scripture (as that which was written by such and such men inspired by the Holy Ghost) from one age to another ever since the time of its first writing,

and

and ſo hath it been brought down to us in theſe days. And thoſe Books which the Primitive Church embraced as thus Sacred and Canonical, and ſo delivered them to ſucceeding ages, theſe do we embrace with all reverence and ſubmiſſion, as the rule both of faith and manners, containing the whole will of God in order to our ſalvation. But then for this very reaſon do we utterly deny that there are any other traditions of equal neceſſity to ſalvation, which are not contain'd in theſe holy Scriptures.

(2.) Note well that tho' the Church of God hath been a moſt faithful preſerver of theſe holy Scriptures, and hath carefully tranſmitted them from one generation to another, yet it is not the Church which gives authority to the Scriptures; as if ſhe by any power in her could make that to be the word of God which is not ſo, or unmake that which is indeed ſo. No, but the Church received for the word of God that which was delivered by holy men inſpired by the Holy Ghoſt, who gave full evidence of this their inſpiration both by the nature of that Doctrine which they delivered, and by the mighty miracles which God enabled them to work for the atteſting the truth of this Doctrine both preached and written. Now the Church which was in being in the firſt ages, when theſe holy men committed their Doctrine to writing, was a moſt competent witneſs of their writing thoſe Books which go under their names, and accordingly received them as the ſacred writings of ſuch perſons divinely Inſpired, and ſo convey'd them to the next generation. Thus the *Jewiſh* Church received the Books of *Moſes* and the Prophets; and thus the Primitive Chriſtian Church received the writings of the Evangeliſts and the Apoſtles, as alſo the Books of the Old Teſtament, both upon the tradition of the *Jewiſh* Church, and alſo upon the authority of our Bleſſed Saviour, who owned

and approved of the same. And thus the books both of the Old Testament and the New have ever since, by the good Providence of God, been preserved in the Christian Church, and handed down from one generation to another, and so shall be, we need not question, to the end of the world. And this same tradition of the Church whereby these holy books are distinguished from all others, and carefully delivered by the former age to the next following, this we give all just regard to, and do freely grant that this is of singular use for our information what books belong to the Canon of Scripture, what not; and by this tradition we learn that this book was written by this man under whose name it goes, and another by that; as for Instance, this by St. *Matthew*, that by St. *Mark*, &c. but whilst the Church thus bears *testimony* to the Scripture, to which *testimony* we give all due regard, she does not, I say, give *authority* to it. For there is a vast difference betwixt these two. It's the Kings hand and seal which gives *authority* to a writing, containing, suppose, a grant of this or that privilege; but some credible persons, his Secretaries or others who were witnesses to his signing or sealing of that writing, may give *testimony* to it, and so procure it to be own'd as authentick. Thus the holy Scriptures which are recommended to us by the *testimony* of the Church, derive their *authority* from God only, who hath set to his seal that they are true, as I have said, both by the miracles that were wrought to confirm the Doctrine contained in them, by the holiness of that Doctrine, and many other circumstances relating thereto.

(3.) Yet again take notice, when I say we give such regard to the testimony of the *Church*, I do not hereby mean the *Roman Church*, as distinct from all others; no, by no means, but the truly Catholick, even the whole Christian Church, whether of the East, or

or Weſt, the North or South. For this hath been the conſtant tradition of the whole Church in all ages ever ſince the Apoſtles, that theſe Books were written by men divinely inſpired, and were given to be the rule of our faith and manners. (If ſome doubt was for a while made concerning a Book or two, yet when theſe doubts were removed, they were received into the Canon with the reſt.) And this has been the opinion not only of the Catholick Church, but of moſt Hereticks and Schiſmaticks alſo, whoſe teſtimony here may be of great force, whilſt they could not but own the authority of Scripture, even though they were confuted by it. Yea to this I may add the acknowledgment of Heathens themſelves, or of *Jews* who lived in thoſe times that the Books which go under the names of St. *Matthew*, St. *Paul*, &c. were indeed written by them. Thus we have a general current tradition, not only of the *Roman* but of all other Churches in the world, that ſuch and ſuch Books belong to the Canon of Scripture; and this is commonly granted by Hereticks and Schiſmaticks themſelves. And even Heathens and Infidels who wrote againſt the Chriſtian Religion, have own'd theſe Books to be written by thoſe perſons whoſe names they bare, who were eminent in that age for the propagating of our holy Religion. So that we have a much more famous and uncontroulable tradition for it, than that the Books which are ſaid to be written by *Tully*, *Virgil*, &c. are indeed their works, which I think no body makes any doubt of.

Laſtly, from what hath been ſaid, you may infer that though we give juſt regard to this current tradition of the Univerſal Church, by which theſe holy Books are convey'd to us as Canonical Scripture, yet it does not in the leaſt follow that we are therefore obliged to embrace all thoſe Doctrines and practices

of

of the *Roman* Church which she would impose upon us under the venerable name of Traditions of the Catholick Church; whilst they are for the most part only the private opinions and usages of their own Church, many of them of very late date, and expresly contrary to the judgment and practice of the Christian Church in the first and purest ages of it, as well as to the Holy Scripture it self. So that there is no more reason for our embracing these traditions of the *Romish* Church, than there was for our Saviour and his Apostles to receive all the traditions of the *Jewish* Church, by many of which they had made void the Commandments of God. After all then, Tradition rightly understood makes nothing against, but apparently for us. For if there be any other Tradition as universal as this of the Books of Holy Scripture, our Church readily embraces it, as before has been expreſt. And we will own that the summ of our Faith is brought down by Tradition, *viz.* in the very form of baptizing in the Name of the Father, Son and holy Ghost; and more largely in the Apostles Creed wherein this form is explain'd. We grant also that at first the Christian Faith was thus planted by the Preaching of the Gospel before the Books of the New Testament were written. But now this our Faith is most plainly and fully contained in these sacred Books, whereas the additional Doctrines of the *Romish* Church are no more brought down by Universal Tradition, than they are contain'd in the holy Scripture, which we assert to be the only sure and perfect rule of Faith and manners, and upon all accounts much mure fit to be so than bare tradition, which they of the Church of *Rome* so vainly boast of. But for your further satisfaction in this point, I shall refer you to a most solid and rational discourse concerning the *Rule of Faith*, done by a Reverend Divine of our Church, and shall now hasten to what remains. L. His

L. His ſeventh Argument is this: *It cannot be ſhewn that for theſe* 1500 *years there hath been any Catholick who held that the Pope of* Rome *was Antichriſt, or that did revile and rail at the holy Sacrifice of the Maſs, or laſtly that did blame Invocation of Saints, the uſual praying for the dead, and ſuch like works of piety belonging to Faith and Religion, which the whole world hath laudably practiſed and reverenced for* 1500 *years. Wherefore it is moſt evident that* Lutherans, Calviniſts, *&c. do moſt wickedly when they dare revile ſuch things.*

T. Theſe points have all of them been ſufficiently diſcuſt already. I have told you how one of their Popes did aſſert him to be the forerunner of Antichriſt, who ſhould aſſume the title of Univerſal Biſhop, which his Succeſſors have now a long time done, whilſt they claim a Supremacy over the Univerſal Church. But which is more material, I have ſhewn how contrary the Doctrines and practices wherein Popery conſiſts are to the nature and deſign of true Chriſtianity, and therefore may well enough be ſtiled Antichriſtian. I have ſhewn that there is not properly a Sacrifice in the Communion, but a commemoration of Chriſts Sacrifice only once offered; and have alſo manifeſted that there is neither Scripture, Reaſon, nor good Antiquity to be pleaded on behalf of that Invocation of Saints, and praying for the Dead, which are now uſed in the Church of *Rome*. As for railing and reviling I would not be guilty of it. 'Tis enough to diſprove their errors and renounce them, to ſhew the falſhood and miſchiefs of them, and this I hope is not to be accounted railing. In a word, whatever he pretends, no Chriſtian Writers for four or five hundred years after our Saviour did aſſert the Biſhop of *Rome* to be Chriſts Vicar on Earth, and under him ſupreme Governour of the whole Chriſtian Church. Nor did they teach or practiſe ſuch Invocation

on of Saints, and praying for the Dead, as are now in use amongst Papists. And upon this account our Church hath with great reason and religion reformed her self from these and the like corrupt innovations.

L. *Doubtless she was so, and the weakness of his Arguments do the more assure me of it. His last is nothing else but a repetition of what he has often said,* viz. *That the first Authors of Christian faith in* Germany, Spain, England, *&c. have acknowledged and brought in no other faith, nor have our forefathers received any other Faith than the Holy Catholick* Roman, *which self-same we have received from our forefathers, and have hitherto conserved. Whence he concludes that Sectaries* (his common name for all Protestants) *have invented new opinions of their own, and presented them to the people as a certain rule of Faith, and the pure word of God; and that consequently they are liable to the curse denounced against those who preach a new Gospel, nor can ever hope to please God and attain eternal happiness, being destitute of the right faith; whereupon he advises his Scholar, considering the nearness of death, and the eternity of Hell torments, to prefer the salvation of his Soul before all sublunary things.*

T. So far his advice is good: but 'tis a wonder that any man who pretends to have a regard to his own or others souls, and believe there is an Hell provided for such as make and love a lye, dare be guilty of such notorious forgeries and calumnies as are contain'd in this his charge against Protestants, as if they had proposed some new opinion of their own devising for a rule of Faith, whilst it's well known that we make the holy Word of God to be the only certain rule of it. And even he himself a little before accused us for saying that nothing is to be believed but what is contained in Gods Word, that is, nothing as necessary to salvation, as I have before granted and proved. This he calls the ground work of the Reformation,

and

and we do not deny it. And that ſame Chriſtian Faith which is contain'd in theſe holy Scriptures at large, and briefly ſumm'd up in the Creed, is that ſame Faith which the firſt planters of Chriſtian Religion taught and eſtabliſhed in our own and other Countries; and this ſelf ſame do we retain to this day. If then the Apoſtles Creed, or the *Nicene* Creed (as we commonly call it) be a new invention, ſo is our faith; but if theſe contain an Abridgement of the truly ancient Catholick Faith, then his charging us with new inventions, is a moſt falſe and malicious ſlander; ſo far are we from it, that a great reaſon why we reject their Doctrines of the Supremacy and Infallibility of their Pope or Church with the reſt of their Errors, is becauſe theſe are new inventions of their own, and no part of the ancient Faith. Wherefore inſtead of pronouncing the heavy ſentence of damnation upon others (which is true Popiſh charity) it behoves them well to conſider how they can exempt themſelves from the curſe threatned to thoſe who preach another Goſpel than the Apoſtles did; which in ſome ſort they do, whilſt they impoſe the Traditions of their Church (of which the Apoſtles never ſpoke a ſyllable) as of equal certainty and authority with the Holy Scriptures themſelves. But I am tired with his Arguments, which ſtill lead me ſo oft to repeat the ſame things. Tho' I ſhall not repent it, if it any way tend to give you more ſatisfaction.

L. *I thank God I am well ſatisfied with your diſcourſe, and am now fully convinced that there is ſmall ſtrength in theſe his Arguments, which he pretends to be ſuch pregnant and unanſwerable things. But after all, there remains ſomething which he calls* an evident demonſtration that the Roman Catholick Church hath been and ſtill is the true Church, *which I ſhall deſire you to take into examination.*

T. Yes very willingly, and I doubt not but we ſhall

shall soon find how little it deserves the name of a demonstration. Tho' if it be possible for him to produce any thing that has an appearance of truth and reason, sure he will now do it in the last place, that it may leave the greater impression upon his Reader. Let us hear then what he says.

CHAP. IV.

An Answer to a pretended Demonstration, That the Roman *Church is the true Catholick Church.*

L. *THIS Demonstration which he so much boasts of, is taken, he says, from one Dr.* Baily, *who it seems revolted from our Church to that of* Rome, *and thus it runs, It will not be denied but that the Church of* Rome *was once a most excellent flourishing Mother-Church. This Church could not cease to be such, but she must fall either by Apostasie, Heresie or Schism.*

(1) *Apostasie is a renouncing not only the Faith of Christ, but the very name and title to Christianity. No man will say that ever the Church of* Rome *fell thus.*

(2) *Heresie is an adhesion to some private or singular opinion or error in Faith, contrary to the general approved Doctrine of the Church. If the Church of* Rome *did ever adhere to any singular or new opinion disagreeable to the common received Doctrine of the Christian world, I pray you satisfie me to these particulars:* 1. *By what General Council was she condemn'd?* 2. *Or which of the Fathers wrote against her?* 3. *Or by what authority was she otherwise reproved? for it seems to me a thing very incongruous, that so great a Church should be condemn'd by every one that has a mind to condemn her.*

(3) *Schism is a departure or a division from the unity*

unity of the Church, whereby that bond and communion held with ſome former Church is broken and diſſolved. If ever the Church of Rome *divided it ſelf by ſchiſm from any other body of faithful Chriſtians, brake communion or went forth from the ſociety of any Elder Church, I pray ſatisfie me to theſe particulars, Whoſe company did ſhe leave? From whom did ſhe go forth? Where was the true Church which ſhe did forſake? For it appears a little ſtrange to me that a Church ſhould be accounted Schiſmatical, when there cannot be aſſign'd another Church different from her (which from age to age hath continued viſible) from which ſhe departed. Hence he infers, That the Church of* Rome *is the only true Church that leads to an eternity of bliſs.*

T. This indeed they commonly boaſt of as an unanſwerable demonſtration, which they often ſcatter abroad in papers for the deluding of ſilly people. Now though I ſee nothing in it but what has already been anſwered again and again, yet for your fuller ſatisfaction, conſider, (1) ſuppoſe that we ſhould grant his whole argument, and every word in it to be true, yet will it do little ſervice to their cauſe, nor will by any means yield that inference he would draw from it, *viz.* that the Church of *Rome* is the only true Church, and therefore to her communion we muſt betake our ſelves, leaving the Church of *England*, if ever we hope for ſalvation. For pray what if we ſhould grant (which yet he will never be able to prove) that the Church of *Rome* is at this day as true and ſound and flouriſhing a Church as we own it once to have been, and ſhould yield that it never fell by Apoſtaſie, Hereſie, or Schiſm, what follows hence I beſeech you? What, that ſhe is the only true Church, and the whole Catholick Church? No, by no means, but only that ſhe ought to be look'd upon as a ſound *part* of the Catholick

tholick Church, and therefore that her members, *viz.* the Christians of that Diocess ought to live in strict fellowship with her, and all other neighbouring Churches ought to give her due respect in maintaining such communion with her as sister Churches are capable of holding one with another. But it does not, I say, in the least follow, that she is the supreme Mistress and Governess of all other Churches, and therefore that all Christians in the world must render subjection to her and her Bishop, otherwise they are to be look'd upon as no members of the Catholick Church, nor at present in a capacity of salvation. For such a supreme Mistress as this she never was when in her best and purest state, nor therefore ought she to be esteemed so at this day; neither do we of this Church owe obedience to her, nor ought we to leave our own Church for her sake or at her command.

L. *I cannot see how his argument proves us at all obliged thereto, nor consequently how it reaches his purpose.*

T. That it does not will still appear plainer, if instead of *Rome* you name any other ancient Church, suppose that of *Jerusalem*, which was once very glorious and flourishing, and deserved above all others to be stiled a Mother-Church; now suppose that at this day it remain'd as sound and good as ever it was, and (to use his language) that it never fell by Apostasie, Heresie or Schism; pray would it hence follow that all other Churches, and particularly this of *England*, must therefore yield subjection to the Church of *Jerusalem*? That our Bishops must pay homage to the Bishop of that Church, owning their dependance upon him, and living in obedience to him? And if they should refuse to do thus, must our people therefore forsake their own Bishops and Clergy, and withdraw from the Churches where they officiate, and entertain Bishops or Priests that are sent over to us from *Jerusalem*,

ſalem, and run into corners with them for the worſhip of God? Surely there is not the leaſt reaſon for any of this; and not a whit more is there for our being thus ſubject to the Biſhop of *Rome*, or for our receiving and joyning with the Prieſts which are ſent over to us by his authority. There never was nor is now any reaſon why we ſhould be thus enſlaved to the *Romiſh* Church. For in the very days of the Apoſtles, and ſome hundred years after when that Church was in its beſt and pureſt ſtate, we of the Church of *England* rendred no ſuch obedience to it, own'd no ſuch dependance upon it. Neither indeed did the Biſhops of that Church then claim any ſuch power and Supremacy over us, and other foreign Churches. Wherefore as our anceſtors the *Britiſh* Chriſtians did not ſubject themſelves to the Biſhop of *Rome*, nor ever thought ſuch a ſubjection neceſſary to their ſalvation, no more have we reaſon to do. Whatever power or precedency the Biſhops of *Rome* might afterwards have in theſe Weſtern parts, either by favour of the Emperor, or by conſent of the Biſhops amongſt themſelves, or moſt of all by their own dayly encroachments (by the meer advantage of their Seat) without either law or reaſon, this, I ſay, nothing at all concerns us at this day, ſince all his power here is utterly abrogated and taken away by juſt and lawful authority, in a moſt mature and deliberate manner, as you before heard. And I then told you how in *Henry* the Eighth's time, before our happy Reformation, it was generally own'd and declared by the Popiſh Clergy themſelves, that the Biſhop of *Rome* had no more authority over us in *England*, than the Biſhop of *Jeruſalem*, *Antioch*, or any other foreign Biſhop. And long before that, our Laws limited and reſtrain'd the Popes power as it ſeem'd good to our Rulers. And ſo do Popiſh Princes themſelves at this day, ſuffering him

to have no more power or priviledg amongst them than themselves think fit. Since then the Church of *Rome* in the very days of its primitive purity and glory had no power over us in this Church, no more hath it at this day, nor ought to have tho it were still as pure and good as at first it was, which we are far from granting. And even thus much may well enough serve to shew the weakness of his Argument.

L. *Very weak it is indeed, when tho it should be granted, yet makes little or nothing to his purpose.*

T. But in the next place I would have you further consider (what has often before been suggested and proved) that the Church of *Rome* is at this day so degenerated and corrupted, that supposing you lived under a Popish Government, even in *Rome* it self, where the Pope is in effect King as well as Bishop, yet there it would be utterly unlawful for you to hold communion with that Church, upon the terms now required by it. For this Church I say, is foully degenerated from its Primitive purity, both in Doctrine, Worship and Discipline, and is thereby guilty in some sort of Apostasie, Heresie and Schism; even so far as to make her communion unlawful, since it cannot be had without a most sinful compliance with her in gross errors and corruptions.

(1.) I say she is guilty of Apostasie, and have before made it evident, in that she teaches such false Doctrines as were not own'd, and uses such a corrupt way of worship as was not practised in the first ages of the Christian Church. Hereby therefore she has Apostatized or departed from that purity and integrity which she was once honoured with, when her faith was spoken of throughout the World, *Rom.* 1. For pray consider, a Church may be guilty of a great degree of Apostasie, tho she does not renounce the very name and title of Christianity. Those Churches of *Asia* to which

which the Messages were sent in the second and third of the *Revelation*, did not renounce the name of Christians, but yet we read that they had faln from their first love, and were so far declined, that of some of them it's said, they had only a name to live, and were dead, and are severely threatned that without Repentance and Reformation they should be destroy'd. How the Church of *Rome* has vilely degenerated from the Primitive Church has already been shewn in many instances, particularly as to their way of Worship, whilst they pray to Angels and Saints, make use of Images, worship the Consecrated Bread, take away the Cup from the People in the Communion, have their service in an unknown Tongue, *&c.* Now because she is guilty of such Apostasie and Corruption in her Worship, every good Christian who makes conscience of worshipping God according to his will reveal'd in his Word, may justly refuse to join with her therein.

(2.) And not only in her Worship but in her Doctrine also she hath apostatized from the Primitive integrity, even from the true rule of Faith, the holy Word of God. And on this account she may justly be reputed guilty of *Heresie*, if by that word yon understand very foul and gross errors apparently contrary to the Holy Scriptures, and to the Doctrines of the Primitive Church. Such for instance are their Doctrines of the Popes Supremacy, and Power of deposing Princes for Heresie, and of their Churches Infallibility, be it in Pope, Council, People, or where you will: for they are not agreed amongst themselves about it. Such also are their Doctrines of Transubstantiation, Purgatory, with others the like. Now here it's a vain thing to ask by what General Council were these Errors condemned, what Fathers wrote against them, *&c.* since there never was any true Ge-

neral Council called since the Church of *Rome* broached and maintain'd these Errors. And those who are commonly honoured with the title of Fathers, *viz.* the Christian Writers for five or six hundred years after our Saviour, were dead and gone before that time. Tho' some of the most holy and learned men of those ages wherein these Errors were first published, did with great zeal and diligence oppose and testifie against them, as against Transubstantiation, Image-worship, *&c.* But it's enough for us that these Doctrines are contrary to Scripture, and to the writings of the most ancient Fathers, and were never established by those famous Councils of old which best deserve the name of General. On account therefore of these false Doctrines also I reckon it utterly unlawful to hold communion with the *Romish* Church, since we cannot be admitted to it, without professing our consent to and approbation of them.

(3.) And therefore lastly, this Church is notoriously guilty of Schism, that is, of a groundless, sinful separation from other faithful Christians, whilst she makes such unlawful terms of communion, that no man well informed can with a good conscience comply with: Now in order to our proving the Church of *Rome* guilty of Schism, there's no great need of answering his captious questions, whose company did she leave? where was the true Church which she forsook, *&c.* For though these questions are proper enough when we speak of the Schism of particular persons from the Church of which they were members, yet the case is different when we are speaking of a whole Church its self becoming Schismatical; this is to be shewn plainest by other methods, to which I shall now apply my self, and shall also as I go along give sufficient answer even to those questions, so as shall abundantly serve to demonstrate the Church

of

of *Rome* to be deeply guilty of this heinous ſin of Schiſm, and that on ſundry accounts.

(1.) If a particular Church ſhall advance her ſelf above all other Churches, and ſet up her Biſhop as the Supreme Governour of all other Chriſtian Biſhops and Churches, and will have no Communion with any but ſuch as ſhall ſubmit to her Supremacy, this is a Schiſmatical Church. For without any juſt ground ſhe withdraws her ſelf from her Siſter-Churches, and gives them juſt cauſe to renounce communion with her. And this is the caſe of the *Romiſh* Church, who makes this proud claim, and hath thereby divided her ſelf from all other Churches that will not ſubmit to her; which they who do, are themſelves partakers with her in Schiſm, whilſt they ſet up a falſe head of the Church without any good warrant from Scripture, Reaſon or Antiquity.

(2.) When a particular Church, on account of this unjuſt claim of Supremacy, ſhall draw away the Members of other particular Churches, perſwading them to ſeparate from their own Biſhops and Paſtors, and to entertain ſuch as ſhe ſets over them, ſhe is in this alſo plainly Schiſmatical as making horrid rents and diviſions in neighbouring Churches, which elſe might have lived in peace and union. And thoſe Members who are thus ſeduced and drawn away, are alſo guilty of Schiſm, in leaving their own proper Paſtors to follow Uſurpers and Intruders. And this alſo is the caſe of the *Romiſh* Church and its adherents at this day.

(3.) If any Church ſhall impoſe unlawful conditions upon her Members, ſo that they cannot live in Communion with her without being guilty of wilful ſin, then is that Church it ſelf to be pronounced Schiſmatical, and not thoſe Members who for ſo good reaſon withdraw from it. This alſo is the

practice of the *Romish* Church whilst she requires men to profess their belief of that which by God's Word they know to be most false, and to practice that which from the same word they are assured is unlawful and abominable.

By all this it appears then that the Church of *Rome*, whilst she cries out against all others as Schismaticks, is her self most Schismatical, in that she sets up her self above all other Churches, and will hold Communion with none but those who enslave themselves to her; draws away People from their own Pastors, and imposes unlawful terms of Communion upon all her Members. Now by this means she hath departed from the way of the Ancient Catholick Church, which never allow'd any such Usurpation, but strictly forbade it in the Canons of the most Ancient, most general and Orthodox Councils. By this means she broke off from the Eastern Church which would not submit to this her Usurpation. And by this means she made it necessary for the Western Churches to withdraw from her, that they might not be defiled with her Errors and Corruptions, and to reform themselves so far as they had been defiled; and most unjust it is in her to refuse Communion with them on account of their Reformation. Yea, by this means, lastly, she hath in some sort departed from her self, I mean from that integrity and purity of Faith and Worship which once was in the Church of *Rome*, and did for some Ages continue in it. But by degrees she did more and more degenerate, till at length she became so polluted, that it was altogether unlawful and unsafe to retain Communion with her, lest partaking in her Sins we should also partake in the Plagues that were due to them. The gradual Apostasie of their Church is so evident, that few of their own most famous Historians have the impudence to deny it. Even

Baronius

Baronus himself, as well as many others, makes heavy complaints of that corrupt state it was faln into, about nine hundred or a thousand years after our Saviour, when he confesses that impudent Strumpets had got such an interest in *Rome*, that Church preferments were disposed of at their pleasure, yea, the Popedom it self: So that he says our Lord seem'd to be asleep in the Ship, which was in danger of being overwhelmed with waves, with much more to the same purpose. And what sort of creatures were then made Popes, appears full plain by the History of their Lives written by their own Followers. Many of them such Monsters of men for all manner of villany and lewdness, that they seem to exceed the very worst of the Heathen Emperors. And can we think it impossible or unlikely for these men to fall into error and superstition who wallowed in all vice and wickedness? Can their Infallibility be secured when their virtue is lost? Will the Spirit of Truth, whom the wicked World cannot receive, dwell in such impure, defiled minds? No certainly, this Blessed Spirit is only promised to those who love our Saviour and keep his Commandments. Some of these Popes are accused, not only of the most bruitish Sensuality, but of Blasphemy, Infidelity, and even Atheism it self. And what a Clergy was the Church like to be filled with, when the very Heads of it were thus corrupt? And alas! what a sad influence was this like to have on the minds and manners of the People? How like would their state be to that of the Jewish Church? Isa. 1. 4, 5, 6. *The head sick, and the heart faint; from the soal of the foot even to the head no soundness in it, but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores.* Or as in Jer. 5. *last. The Prophets prophesie falsly, the Priests bare rule by their means, and the people love to have it so.* No wonder then, if whilst the Watchmen slept, the Enemy came and sowed tares.

Plainly, it's no wonder in such times of ignorance and profaneness, that manifold errors and abuses both in Doctrine and Worship should creep into the Church; especially such as made for the interest and reputation of the Clergy, who having little of sanctity and true worth left, they take other methods to recommend themselves to the people; and having an ignorant credulous people to deal with, their chief business was to gratifie their fond superstitious humour and to advance themselves in their esteem. And most of those things in difference betwixt us and the Church of *Rome* do plainly serve to this purpose, either to promote the wealth and honour of the Clergy, or to please the senses, and amuse the fancies of a carnal superstitious people; to keep them in ignorance, and indulge them in their sins, rather than to bring them to sound knowledg, and true repentance and godliness, as the instances oft before given do plainly shew. You see then into what a corrupt state the Church of *Rome* hath degenerated in these latter Ages; and therefore how great Reason there was to Reform our Church from Popish corruptions; and how little reason you have to desert this well reformed Church, whereof by God's Mercy you are a Member, to run over to *Rome* which abhors all thoughts of a Reformation. Nay, you would have no reason to betake your self thither, though that Church was at this day as pure and orthodox as when it was first planted by the Apostles.

L. *So little reason do I see for my going over to the* Romish *Church, that had I till now lived in communion with it, I durst not for a world continue any longer therein. And by what you have said, I plainly find, that this* Evident Demonstration *my Author so boasts of, is a piece of as meer sophistry as any other of his* Pregnat Arguments *and* Unanswerable Propositions, *of which he has mustered*

ſtred up a great number to little purpoſe. And whilſt there is no more ſtrength in his Reaſons, I give little heed to his cenſures how bitter ſoever: For he uſes much what the ſame harſh and uncharitable language in the concluſion of his Book that he did at the beginning. That no Salvation is to be had out of the Church of Rome; *that if we will not have her for our Mother, we muſt not expect to have God for our Father, quoting St.* Auſtin *for it.*

T. But without all Reaſon, whilſt he applies to their particular Church, what is ſaid of the Catholick Church of Chriſt. But nothing more common in their mouths than the *Roman* Catholick Church, as if there were no true Chriſtians or Catholicks in the World but thoſe of their own party; which how unreaſonable, as well as uncharitable it is, we have before ſeen.

L. *Certainly it is both in a very high degree, whilſt he dare boldly doom all men to damnation except his* Roman *Catholicks, whom he looks upon as the only favorites of God, and heirs of Heaven: For he ſays,* they cannot be in the leaſt danger of miſſing the inheritance of God's children in the next Life, if they have lived as they believed.

T. What their condition ſhall be, let us leave to the juſt Judge of all men; remembring the Apoſtles ſaying, *Not he who commendeth himſelf is approved, but he whom the Lord commendeth.* How far the ill education and ignorance of any of them may ſerve to excuſe or leſſen their faults, it becomes not us to determine. But as to our ſelves we may ſafely aſſert, that for us to go againſt the light of Gods Word and our own Conſciences, in profeſſing their Errors, and joyning in their corrupt Worſhip, would be a piece of inexcuſable and damnable wickedneſs: Whereas on the other hand we may reſt fully ſatisfied and aſſured, that if we ſincerely believe the Holy Goſpel, which is at this

this day purely and plainly taught in our Church, and live in strict and stedfast obedience to the precepts of it, which are dayly inculcated upon us, we shall most certainly obtain that Eternal Salvation which in this Gospel is promised to all such obedient Believers. Of this we are as sure as that God is true: for Heaven and Earth shall sooner fail than one tittle of his Holy Word on which we depend.

L. *Whilst we depend on this Word, certainly we shall never be deceived or disappointed. But methinks it's very bold Language, and little better than Blasphemy, with which my Author concludes his Book, when he says that his* Roman *Catholicks may, at the hour of death, with confidence use those words of an Ancient Writer,* O Lord, if it be Error which we have believed, we are deceived by thee: for thou hast confirmed these things to us by such signs and prodigies as could not be done but by thee; *with more to that purpose.*

T. This can only with truth be spoken concerning the Christian Religion, to which God bare witness by mighty Signs and Wonders. But to apply it to the false Doctrines of Popery, is indeed no better than Blasphemy: For neither our Saviour or his Apostles ever taught these Doctrines; nor did God ever work a Miracle for the confirming of them.

L. *Surely it would argue more modesty to suspect the weakness of their own judgment, and better to examine their Cause, rather than to charge God himself with deceiving them if they are deceived.*

T. Very true, but you know the Proverb, *None so bold as those that are blind*: otherwise certainly they have reason enough to suspect that cause to be very weak which is supported by no better Arguments than these which your Author hath produced; who yet no doubt hath given us the best he could devise of his own head, or meet with in their Writers.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Of the number of Sacraments, with ſome other things briefly diſcuſt, and the concluſion of the whole.

L. *SIR, I am now come to the end of my little Book, and ought therefore to put an end to the trouble I have given you; yet before we part, will you pleaſe to ſatisfy me in one thing, of which I find no mention in my Author.*

T. I ſhall willingly, when I hear what it is.

L. *'Tis concerning the number of Sacraments: for* Papiſts *charge it as a great defect upon our Church, that we have but two, whilſt they ſay they have ſeven.*

T. How little reaſon there is for this Charge, will ſoon appear, if you conſider, that as to four of theſe five which the *Papiſts* pretend to have more than we, tho' we give them not the name of Sacraments, yet we have the things themſelves. And as to the fifth, there is not the leaſt reaſon that we ſhould receive, or they retain it. For your fuller ſatisfaction I ſhall name them to you, and in a few words make good what I have ſaid.

L. *Pray will you pleaſe to do it, and I ſhall trouble you with no more queſtions hereafter.*

T. To the Sacraments of Baptiſm and the Lords Supper, which both we and they receive, they do further add Confirmation, Holy Orders, Marriage, Penance and extreme Unction. Now, as to the name of Sacrament, it's a vain thing to diſpute about words, till we are agreed of the ſenſe and meaning of them. For if by Sacrament they mean any ſacred rite or uſage that may ſignify ſome grace or ſome good duty, or by way of alluſion may ſerve to ſome good purpoſe in Religion, then inſtead of ſeven, they may perhaps

perhaps reckon seventeen Sacraments or many more. And in this large and looser sense the Ancients commonly made use of the word; giving the name of Sacrament to many things relating to Religion, which are any way mystical or significant, yea, frequently they call our Religion it self a Sacrament or Mystery. And if they of the Church of *Rome* will use the word in this large sense, and so stile the several things now mentioned, Sacraments, let them enjoy their liberty, I think it's not worth contending about. Only let them not say that we despise the things themselves, because we think it not so fit to give them this name. For by a Sacrament we understand (as it's expresst in our Church-Catechism) *an outward sign of an inward spiritual grace given unto us, ordained by Christ, as a means whereby we receive the same* Grace, *and a pledge to assure us thereof.* Now in this sense we say, that only Baptism and the Lords-Supper are properly to be called Sacraments, being ordained by Christ's expres command, as a way and means for the bestowing of his Grace upon all that duly partake of them. These are as it were the Seals of the Covenant of Grace (as Divines use to stile them) which all Christians, if they have opportunity, are obliged to make use of. For hereby we do in a solemn manner profess our selves to be Christ's Disciples, and engage our selves to walk in all holy obedience to his Laws, and so make a Covenant with him; and upon our sincerity herein, we receive Grace from God to enable us for our duty, and have an assurance of his Favour, and of all the blessings that flow from it, in and through Jesus Christ. Thus hath our Lord plainly ordain'd, that all who believe in him should be Baptized with Water in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, for the profession of our Faith in him, and for the receiving the remission of our sins with spiritual Regeneration.

Thus

Thus did he institute the holy Communion, commanding all Christians to celebrate the same in remembrance of him, for a commemoration of his death till his second coming; and hereby we partake of the Body and Blood of Christ, for the refreshing and strengthning of our Souls. Plainly then you see how these two Sacraments were ordained by Christ himself, for the use of all Christians, to be as it were the badges of their profession, that hereby they might solemnly testify their consent to the Covenant of Grace, and at the same time may receive the blessing of his Covenant. But now this cannot be said of those other things which the *Papists* call Sacraments, how useful soever any of them may be in other respects. For though we call them not Sacraments, yet we do not in the least deny whatever of goodness or usefulness is to be found in them, but do our selves, I say, embrace them, and make use of them (all but one) to such good ends and purposes as they serve for, which will easily appear by a brief survey of them.

First, As to *Confirmation*, you may see in what esteem it is in our Church, by the Office appointed for it in the Liturgy, where it is expressly ordered that those who are come to years of discretion, and well instructed in the Principles of Religion, so that they are capable of taking upon themselves the vow that was made for them in Baptism, that they should openly, before the Bishop and the Congregation, make profession of their Faith, and ratify and confirm their Baptismal Vow; whereupon the Bishop lays his hands upon them (according to the most ancient usage in blessing and praying for a person) and begs of God to strengthen and increase in them the Graces of his holy Spirit, that they may continue for ever in his service. And this practice of Confirmation many of our Divines, who have written about it, do highly com-

commend, as a very laudable, useful and ancient constitution, and which (if the Rules of our Church about it were more duly observed) mightily tends to the promoting of knowledg and godliness; even much more than as it is practised in the Church of *Rome*, where it's administred to infants not long after Baptism; whereas it seems plainly designed in our Church for those who are of a competent Age, that they may take their Baptismal Vow upon themselves, which if they do seriously and understandingly, it must needs make the deeper impression on their minds, more firmly oblige them to the observance of it, and better qualify them for the assistance of God's Grace, and render them more fit for the Holy Communion, where again they solemnly renew the same Vow. Yet all this while we do not reckon confirmation to be a Sacrament (in the sense our Church uses that word) nor do we equal it with Baptism and the Lords Supper, since we find no such express institution of it by our Saviour in the Gospel, nor such promises of Grace made upon the use of it. Nor therefore does our Church think that the want of it will be any hindrance to the Salvation of baptized Infants, who dye before they are confirmed.

As for *Holy Orders* there is much less reason to give the name of Sacrament to them, since they belong to only one sort of men, who are thereby devoted, not to Christianity (that was done at Baptism) but to the work of the Ministry. In the mean time no body sure can be ignorant of the practice of our Church in this matter; how careful she is in conferring holy Orders on all those whom she admits to minister in holy things. And with what gravity and solemnity this Office is performed, may be seen in those publick forms that are appointed in our Liturgy, for the ordaining of Bishops, Priests and Deacons.

As

As for *Marriage*, though we grant that in it is ſignifyed the Myſtical Union betwixt Chriſt and his Church, yet we do not call it a Sacrament, nor ſee any reaſon ſo to do, conſidering the definition of a Sacrament given before. But yet we believe it to be an honourable ſtate inſtituted by God in the time of Man's innocency; yea, with the Apoſtle we judg it to be *honourable in all men*, Prieſts as well as others, St. *Peter* himſelf having been a married Man: Whilſt the Church of *Rome* forbids her Clergy to marry, thereby ſeeming to have no great eſteem for it: She extols a ſingle life more highly above it than there ſeems good reaſon for; and reckons them a more holy ſort of perſons than others who abſtain from Marriage, whilſt yet they call it a Sacrament, it's well if they be not more unholy.

But I haſten to that of *Penance*. Here indeed we do not with the Church of *Rome* exact from men a particular confeſſion of all their private faults, nor ſend them on long pilgrimages to this or that Saint, nor make them go ſo far barefoot or barehead, nor oblige them to give themſelves ſo many laſhes, or to ſay over ſo many *Pater Noſters* and *Ave Maries*: but rather we preſs upon them the great duty of Repentance and Reformation without which they cannot be pardoned; that they ſhould confeſs their ſins to God with ſhame and ſorrow, ſpeedily and thorowly forſaking the ſame. In ſome caſes alſo there is a publick Penance enjoyn'd by the diſcipline of the Church, that notorious offenders ſhould openly acknowledg their crimes, beg pardon of God and the Congregation, profeſs their ſorrow and purpoſes of amendment, requeſting the prayers of Miniſter and people on their behalf. But this while, we ſee no Reaſon to give the name of Sacrament to mens expreſſing their repentance. As to any bodily auſterities that may tend to the mortification

of ſin, or to a ſort of holy Revenge on our ſelves for it, our Church gives no particular precept about them, but leaves every man to his own diſcretion, as the Goſpel has done: but ſhe moſt earneſtly calls them to *break off their ſins by righteouſneſs, and their iniquities by ſhewing mercy to the poor:* and very uſeful it is for them to adviſe oft with their ſpiritual Guide.

You ſee then as to theſe four which Papiſts call Sacraments, that our Church cannot in the leaſt be charged with any defect for not having the things themſelves: for we both uſe them all, and give them due eſteem, tho we do not think the title of Sacraments, in our ſenſe of the word, properly to belong to them.

As for the laſt thing mention'd, that of *Extreme Unction*, which is an anointing of dying perſons with Oil conſectated for that purpoſe, we are ſo far from accounting it a Sacrament, that we do not at all uſe it in our Church, nor ſee any reaſon why we ſhould. That which *Papiſts* chiefly alledg for it, is from St. *James*, chap. 5. 14, 15. *Is any man ſick among you, let him call for the Elders of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord, and the prayer of faith ſhall ſave the ſick, and the Lord ſhall raiſe him up.* Now it ſeems moſt probable that this cuſtom was to laſt but during the time of miraculous Cures, in which ſometimes Oil was made uſe of, as *Mark* 6. 13. though ſome think there might be a medicinal virtue in the Oil it ſelf, But however it be, it affords not a ſufficient ground for what is now practiſed in the Church of *Rome*. For in thoſe times you ſee it was intended for the health of the body, whereas the anointing amongſt *Papiſts* is pretended to be for the benefit of their ſouls, and is commonly uſed when they perceive no hopes of recovery, which is a meer device of their own, there being no command of God for

for it, nor any promiſe of Spiritual benefit by this kind of Unction. Thus you may ſtill perceive how little reaſon they have to blame us for having only Two Sacraments whilſt they boaſt of Seven.

L. *I plainly ſee they have no reaſon for it, ſince whatever is good and uſeful in theſe things we retain and enjoy, though we do not call them Sacraments.*

T. But whilſt they falſly accuſe us of defectiveneſs herein, it beſeems them well to conſider their own guilt in taking away one half of a true Sacrament, I mean the wine in the Communion, from the people, ſo plainly contrary to our Saviours inſtitution and the univerſal practice of the Church for many ages after. Such a material defect as this, is a moſt palpable blemiſh to their Church, and cannot be wiped off by their new-fangled Doctrine of Concomitancy, deviſed for the purpoſe, of which I have formerly ſpoken. And even this is a very good reaſon to keep people from entring into the Church of *Rome*, in that they cannot there partake of the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, according to our Saviours appointment, one half of it being kept back from them.

L. *And as great reaſon you have ſhew'd there is to keep out of their Communion, in reſpect of that part of the Sacrament which they do adminiſter, I mean the conſecrated bread: for this they will have given to none but thoſe who believe it to be God, and worſhip it before they eat it.*

T. You ſpeak a very great truth; and it may well ſeem matter of wonder, that ever a ſociety of men calling themſelves Chriſtians, ſhould have ſo little regard to Chriſts own inſtitution and to the peace and welfare of his Church, as to make ſuch alterations in the adminiſtring this holy Sacrament, that no Chriſtian who is well informed can with a good conſcience partake of it with them. For I muſt declare plainly, I do not ſee how a man can doit, without being gulty

of Idolatry in Worſhipping the Bread, and of conſenting to Sacriledg in being deprived of the Cup.

L. *Two ſuch horrid crimes that one would think ſhould ſtartle any man that has not a blind mind, or a ſeared Conſcience.*

T. The prejudice of education I confeſs is very great, and few people ever get above it, which makes it leſs ſtrange for thoſe that are born and bred amongſt *Papiſts* to ſwallow theſe things without ſcruple; eſpecially conſidering in what ignorance their people commonly are kept; but for *Proteſtants* who have any knowledg in Religion, any reverence for the holy Scriptures, that ever any of theſe ſhould revolt from their own Church, and break over ſo many difficulties, to get into Communion with the Church of *Rome* in all her corruptions, may juſtly be matter of wonder and aſtoniſhment.

L. *'Tis ſtrange how they can ever bring their Conſciences to ſuch a compliance.*

T. God only knows the hearts of men, and to his judgment we muſt leave them: But methinks the caſe is ſo plain, that no man of competent underſtanding, who conſiders things impartially, and hath a due regard to God's Word, and a ſincere deſire to pleaſe God and ſave his Soul, can eaſily be drawn to approve of thoſe palpable errors and abſurdities, thoſe ſcandalous and groſly evil practices, which are at this day taught and impoſed in the *Roman* Church. And I think it may come to paſs through the wiſe and juſt Judgment of Almighty God, that he hath permitted this corrupt Church ſo foully to degenerate in ſome particular inſtances, the better to preſerve honeſt and well-meaning Souls from being carried away with her power, pomp, and glory; and from being deluded by thoſe fine pretences and ſubtle inſinuations, which her Agents make uſe of to draw Diſciples after them.

L. *So*

L. *So far there may be a good effect of those bad things wherewith that Church is defiled.*

T. God grant the notoriousness of them may so appear to all, that those who are yet innocent may be preserved from being seduced and infected, and those who are guilty may become sensible of their sin and danger, and do their utmost to reform a Church so polluted, or speedily leave her if she hates to be reformed. But for your self, I hope, after all that hath been said, there is not the least danger of your forsaking that sound and good Church whereof you are a Member, for so corrupt a one as that of *Rome* is at this day.

L. *By the grace of God I hope there is not. For I never could incline to think such a change reasonable; but by the discourses now had with you, I am more fully perswaded of the utter unlawfulness, the folly and infinite hazzard of it. And whilst I have the use of my reason I am confident I shall always be of the same mind. And I trust I shall never be so far forsaken of God, as to act contrary to my own setled judgment and conscience.*

T. God forbid you should. And since what hath been said may with Gods blessing be suffic ent to secure you from deserting your own Church for the *Romish*, I have no inclination to trouble you with any more points in controversie betwixt us and them.

L. *I suppose you have spoken to the most material already.*

T. I think I have so. But there are some others which have been agitated with great heat, such particularly as about Justification, wherein it consists, and on what condition it is obtain'd, whether by faith or works; and also concerning the merit of good works, with others the like. About which many of their Authors have written at a very extravagant rate, and perhaps some of our own have run into a contrary

extreme; especially at the beginning of the Reformation, when, in the heat of opposition, they said some such things as cannot well be defended. And sometimes there has been much wrangling about words, one side taking them in this sense, the other in that. To instance only in Justification, The Popish writers generally mean thereby (though very improperly) the same as Sanctification, which hath occasion'd much confusion in the Disputations on this subject. All that I shall say of it is this, Let it be granted that it is only for Christs sake that we are pardoned and saved, and we shall readily acknowledg that in order to our obtaining these benefits, there is necessarily required on our part that faith which works by love both to God and our Neighbour, and produces a sincere obedience to all the precepts of the Gospel: *As to the merit of good works*, if the word *merit* be taken strictly and properly, it's most unreasonable to assert it. For certainly our works which are so very mean and imperfect, which are performed in the time of this short life, and which in duty we are bound to perform, which add nothing to God, and are done by the assistance of his Grace, these works cannot in strict reckoning deserve to be rewarded with eternal glory. The holy Scripture most plainly tells us, *That our goodness extends not to God, that he hath no need of us, nor receives any benefit from us, when we have done all that was required we are to account our selves unprofitable servants; that we have nothing but what we received from him; that though death be properly the wages of sin, yet eternal life is the free gift of God through Jesus Christ, &c.* But yet on the other hand, considering the gracious promise which God hath made to all true believers, that continue patient in well doing, on this account we may safely grant that an holy life shall be most richly rewarded with everlasting happiness; and

good

good men, in a large and more modest sense of the word, may be said to deserve it, in that they have by Gods grace performed the condition on which it was promised. In this sense the Ancients commonly used the words *merit* and *reward*. So in holy Scripture we read of a *recompence of reward* (though such a one as is of *grace* not strict *debt*) and true Christians are said to be *worthy* of this happiness, *Rev.* 3. 4. and to have a right to enter into life, that is according to the tenour of Gods gracious Covenant, *Revel.* 22. 14. Wherefore if they of the *Romish* Church will be satisfied with such concessions as these (as perhaps the more modest of them will) there need be no contention about these matters. And some very learned and judicious Writers of our own and other Reformed Churches, when they have come to state the controversie clearly and impartially, have freely acknowledged, that the difference betwixt us in these and some other points is not so great as some hot Disputants on both sides would make it. However, I shall not further enlarge on them; for it is not my business to display all the Errors of the *Roman* Church, (nor indeed is it in my power) much less do I desire to aggravate things, and make any of their opinions seem worse than really they are. But my design all along hath been to give you such a true and just account of things as might fix you in communion with the Church of *England*, and preserve you from any inclination, or thought of going over to *Rome*; and that in brief for such plain reasons as these, even because our Church is a sound part of the Catholick Church, and has full authority over you by the Laws of God and the Land; and since here all things necessary to Salvation may be enjoy'd, and nothing is required that may be an hindrance to it. Whereas on the other hand the Church of *Rome* has no jurisdiction over us in *England*, nor

ought to have: and does alſo propoſe moſt unjuſt terms of Communion, with which you cannot comply, without apparent hazard of your Salvation, ſince ſhe requires all her members to embrace and profeſs groſs Errors for Divine Truths; and enjoyns the doing of many things as neceſſary duties, which are very heinous ſins againſt Gods expreſs commands.

L. *Theſe reaſons are indeed both plain and weighty, ſuch that I can eaſily underſtand, and do feel their ſtrength, and by Gods aſſiſtance ſhall ever remain under the power of them.*

T. I hope you will ſo. And ſince you are ſo ſenſible of their truth and force, give me leave before we part, to beſeech you always ſo to keep up the ſenſe of them that you may thereby be ſecured from all attempts that may be made upon you, not only by thoſe of the Church of *Rome*, but by ſuch as are commonly called Proteſtant Diſſenters, though indeed by their ſeparating principles and practices, I think they diſſent from all Proteſtant Churches whatever. Let none of theſe then ever draw you into the way of ſeparation from the Church of *England*, under pretence of bringing you into purer ſocieties, where the word is more powerfully preached, and Sacraments more purely adminiſtred.

L. *I hope I ſhall never be wrought upon by ſuch pretences as theſe; for whilſt in our Church we enjoy all things needful to Salvation, and have nothing ſinful impoſed upon us, ſurely it ought to be eſteemed a very pure and ſound Church, in whoſe communion I ought to remain. Nor can I ſee the leaſt reaſon why I ſhould diſobey my Superiours, and break the peace of this Church and ſeparate from it, to ſeek after I know not what greater purity in this corner or that.*

T. Keep you to this, and you will not eaſily be ſhaken. For let *Papiſts* or Separatiſts object what they pleaſe,

pleaſe, moſt certain it is that in our Church the Goſpel of Chriſt is moſt plainly and powerfully preached, the holy Sacraments purely adminiſtred, and the Worſhip of Almighty God gravely and ſolemnly performed; our Prayers and Praiſes offered up to the true God in the name of Jeſus Chriſt, framed according to the will of God revealed in his Word, and expreſt in our own Tongue, that ſo all the people may eaſily underſtand them, be duly affected with them, and heartily ſay *Amen* to them. What then ſhould hinder any good Chriſtian from joining with a Church ſo well conſtituted, in a conſtant, reverent attendance upon the Word, Prayers and Sacraments, which may with ſo much freedom and lawfulneſs here be enjoyed?

L. *I am ſo far from knowing any reaſon to the contrary, that I think we have cauſe to embrace this priviledg with great readineſs and joy, and with moſt hearty thankfulneſs to Almighty God for his ſingular mercy, in affording us theſe bleſſed advantages above moſt other Nations in the World.*

T. And yet you ſhall often hear ſome people, either ignorantly or maliciouſly, crying out of Popery, Superſtition, Will-worſhip, and I know not what, which ought not to move you in the leaſt.

L. *There's no reaſon to be moved with bare noiſe and ill words, whilſt I know nothing amongſt us that deſerves them.*

T. It's plain there is not; for when you come to examine the matter, their greateſt objections againſt us are, that we have Forms of Prayer; (there were more reaſon to object it as a fault if we had none) that we kneel at the Communion (and why may we not as well as at our Prayers?) That the Miniſter ſometimes wears a Surplice (why not as well as a Gown?) That he makes a tranſient ſign of the Croſs over the Childs forehead after Baptiſm (and what

hurt in doing it, more than in ſpeaking the words of liſting him under the banner of a Crucified Saviour?) Are not theſe very weighty matters to make ſuch noiſe and diſturbance about?

L. *I have heard theſe things talked againſt by ſome People, but never met with any ſolid argument to prove them ſinful.*

T. No, nor I am confident ever will. Very eaſie it were to anſwer the common objections againſt them, and to ſhew the lawfulneſs of them, whilſt there is nothing to be found in God's Word to the contrary; and *where there is no law, there's no tranſgreſſion.* But ſomething of this nature I have done otherwhere, and you may find many excellent Diſcourſes to this purpoſe written by the Divines of our Church, both formerly and very lately. Only pray conſider what an unreaſonable thing it is for any to pretend, that they have as good ground to ſeparate from our Church, as our Church it ſelf had to ſeparate from *Rome.* Surely there is a very plain and vaſt difference in the caſe, ſince (as I have often told you) the Church of *Rome* has nothing to do with us in *England,* and ſhe alſo impoſed things unlawful as conditions of Communion, Neither of which can be juſtly pleaded by our Separatiſts. For I hope the Authority of our Church and State extends to thoſe of our own Nation; and I reckon that our obedience in this caſe is bound upon us by the expreſs commands of God himſelf, which enjoyn us to be ſubject to the higher Powers, to Kings and all in authority under them; to obey them that have the Spiritual rule over us, and watch for our Souls; to have reſpect to the very cuſtom of the Church wherein we live, to conſult for the peace of it, and to avoid all factions and diviſions. By ſuch precepts I reckon we are obliged to ſubmit to lawful Authority, requiring of us nothing but what is lawful.

And

And nothing elſe doth our Church require: for there is nothing in her Prayers or Sacraments contrary to the Word of God. This holy Word, neither directly or by any good conſequence, forbids forms of Prayer, or kneeling at the Communion, which is all that the people are concerned in, for as to the Croſs and Surplice they belong to the Miniſter. Now one would wonder how ever any man ſhould fancy that a Prayer becomes unlawful by my knowing it beforehand, and having often uſed it, one would think this ſhould rather recommend it. Or why ſhould it ſeem unlawful to kneel in reverence to God, when I receive from him ſuch great bleſſings as are repreſented and beſtow'd in the Lords Supper, and am praying that I may effectually partake of them? Are theſe things to be compared with what the Church of *Rome* requires of its members? Is a form of Prayer to the true God, like worſhipping an Image, or praying to an Angel or Saint? (which in other words is but to ask whether ſaying the Lords-prayer be as much a fault as praying to the Virgin *Mary*?) Is our kneeling to God at the Communion like adoring the Hoſt, which our Church expreſly declares her abhorrence of as groſs Idolatry. But beſides all this, it cannot ſo fitly be ſaid that our Church ſeparated from the Church of *Rome* (to which ſhe ow'd no obedience) but rather that ſhe only Reformed her ſelf from ſuch errors and corruptions as the *Romiſh* Church was infected with, and had ſpread the infection amongſt her neighbours. But Papiſts properly were the Separatiſts, who refuſed to hold communion with our Church after it was Reformed, though this Reformation was wrought in a regular manner, and by juſt authority, as I have before ſhewn. And yet after all, ſhall this our Church be ſtiled Popiſh, when thoſe holy men who were chief Reformers of it, and who compoſed and uſed thoſe Prayers which

which are objected againſt, laid down their Lives many of them for a teſtimony againſt Popery? Yea, and all other Reformed Churches have profeſt their great honour for our Church, their communion with it, and have as occaſion has been offered, declared againſt thoſe who ſeparate from it? yea the moſt learned and judicious Nonconformiſts themſelves have heretofore with great zeal preach'd and written againſt ſuch ſeparation, and ſome of them more lately. So that they who ſeparate from us, and ſet up Churches of their own gathering, in oppoſition to thoſe eſtabliſhed by Law, ſeem to have eſpouſed a very deſperate cauſe, which has neither Scripture, Reaſon nor good authority to defend it. Strange, that the Church of *England*, which hath generally been accounted the glory and bulwark of the Reformation, the envy and vexation of the Papiſt, that yet ſhe her ſelf ſhould be deſerted and condemned by thoſe who come out of her own bowels, as a Popiſh Church! O that there were many more ſuch Popiſh Churches in the world! Or rather, O that all Chriſtian Churches were ſo throughly Reformed from Popery! In how happy a ſtate would Chriſtendom then be! Wherefore, again let me beſeech you, as you have any regard to the peace and proſperity of Church and State, and to the intereſt of Religion amongſt us, ſee that you vehemently abhor all thoughts of Separation, utterly reject all temptations to it. For Religions ſake, I ſay, for it's too too apparent how much this ſuffers by our diviſions as well as the publick weal; whilſt we are broken into parties and factions, it threatens ruin to the Kingdom thus divided againſt it ſelf, yea and to the *Kingdom of God* alſo that is amongſt us; for this conſiſts *in righteouſneſs and peace, and that joy in the Holy Ghoſt*, which flows from charity and concord. But *where there is ſtrife and envy*, there will be *confuſion* and

and *diſorder, and every evil work*, cenſures and ſlanders, hatred and malice, ſedition and rebellion, biting and devouring each other, till at length, without the infinite mercy of God, we ſhall be conſumed one of another, or by a common enemy. Wherefore I will add, if you have any Zeal againſt Popery, ſee that you live in ſtrict communion with the Church of *England*, as now by Law eſtabliſhed. For nothing can be more directly framed in oppoſition to Popery, than the whole conſtitution of our Church; and ſhould this be broken to pieces, to what ſhall we crumble? whither ſhall we run? who can tell us? nay, who cannot tell what in all likelihood will be the event? If in a beſieged City there be ſeveral factions, that in fury againſt each other break down their own walls, and throw open their Gates; are they not like to fall into the hands of their enemies, who are watching for ſuch an advantage? whatever abhorrence our Diſſenters have for Popery, they cannot do a thing more pleaſing to the Papiſt or more ſerviceable to his cauſe, than to reproach the Church of *England* as Popiſh, and ſet up themſelves as a party againſt it. By this means they give their aſſiſtance for the weakning and deſtroying of that Church which the Papiſt on the other hand hath ſo long been endeavouring to undermine and ſubvert; by whoſe overthrow though the Papiſt might be exalted, yet themſelves moſt probably (and moſt juſtly too) would be cruſhed in pieces by its ruins. But I fear I have tired you.

L. *So far from it, that I am greatly pleaſed with this your ſerious and earneſt advice, which may the better ſecure me againſt all temptations to ſeparation, if hereafter I ſhould meet with them. But I hope, through the grace of God, I ſhall always live ſo mindful of my duty to yield obedience to my Rulers in all things lawful, and to do my utmoſt for preſervation of the peace both of*

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Church and State, that I ſhall never be drawn into any ſeparating party or faction, which oft occaſions much diſturbance to both. Moreover, I thank God, I am ſo fully convinced, not only of the lawfulneſs and duty, but of the great and unſpeakable advantage of living in communion with the Church of England, *that I feel not in my ſelf the leaſt inclination to depart from it. For here we have the Holy Scriptures, the food of our ſouls, freely allow'd us, and daily read amongſt us; very frequently they are explain'd to us, and our duty from them inforced upon us in uſeful, practical Sermons. Our prayers, I am ſatisfied, are holy and good, ſuch, that if it be not our own faults, we may uſe them with much devotion. The Holy Sacraments are here adminiſtred according to our Saviours own appointment, ſo far as he hath expreſt it. And as to any ceremonies or circumſtances of Worſhip, eſtabliſhed by the prudence and authority of the Church, I know nothing but what is very innocent and lawful, very grave and decent, agreeable to the ſolemnity of Divine Worſhip. So that I am ready to ſay with St.* Peter, Lord whither ſhall we go? *ſince here we have the* words of eternal life: *here we have the way to it plainly diſcovered, and the means for attaining it plentifully afforded.*

T. I am very glad to hear you diſcourſe ſo honeſtly and judiciouſly, and I pray God keep you ever in this good mind, and grant that you and all other Chriſtians may make a right uſe of all thoſe means and advantages which are here afforded in order to their Salvation. To which purpoſe, before I diſmiſs you, give me leave with all poſſible earneſtneſs to beſeech you not to ſatisfie your ſelf with holding the true Religion, and being of a true Church, whoſe Doctrine and Worſhip is holy and good, but ſee above all things that you your ſelf be a truly religious and good man. Elſe what ſhall it

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avail you to be a member of the beſt and pureſt Church in the World, if you be an impure, unholy Perſon, no true living member of Jeſus Chriſt? Though Loyalty to our Prince, and Conformity to the Church are great duties, yet theſe will not excuſe our diſobedience to any of Chriſts Laws, who is the King of Kings, and Head of the Church. What tho' we are not Papiſts, Hereticks, or Schiſmaticks, yet if we be wicked and looſe livers, we are in a worſe condition than even Heathens and Infidels. The inordinate love of money may damn a Man as well as the worſhip of an Idol of Gold or Silver; yea, Covetouſneſs is ſtiled Idolatry, and ſo is Voluptuouſneſs too; for the ſenſual Man is ſaid to *make his belly his god*. To prefer the Creature before the Creator, and the pleaſures of ſin before the joys of Heaven, may well be reckoned amongſt the moſt vile and damnable errors and hereſies. He that lives in malice and envy, that hates his brother, and reviles, oppreſſes or cheats him, is a moſt factious and ſchiſmatical man; for he makes a rent and ſchiſm in the body of Chriſt; and is broken off from it, by being deſtitute of that charity which is the bond of perfection, by which fellow Chriſtians are united one to another, and all of them to Chriſt their Head. Let it not ſuffice therefore that you live in an excellent Church, where you have the Word, Prayers and Sacraments, according to Chriſts appointment, but ſee that you diligently improve them for the promoting of good life, this being the great end for which they were appointed. Joyn conſtantly in the prayers with great reverence and devotion, and then live according to your Prayers and profeſſions: Firmly believe the Articles of your Creed, and let your faith work by love. Attend to the reading and preaching of God's Word with care and ſerioufneſs, and ſee that you be not an Hearer only but a Doer of

the Word. Often reflect upon your Baptismal Vow, and be faithful to it in fighting against the World, the Flesh and the Devil, most entirely devoting your self to the service of the blessed God, and his Son Jesus, in leading a godly, righteous and sober life. Frequently renew these Vows at the Holy Communion, and there most thankfully commemorate the death of our blessed Saviour, *Who loved us, and gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purifie to himself a peculiar People zealous of good works.* Let his love constrain you to obedience; and let the remembrance of his Death and Resurrection mortifie all sin in you, and quicken you to newness of life. Let the terrors of the Lord perswade you to repentance, and new obedience; and let the hopes of eternal glory make you patient, constant and cheerful in well doing. In a word, see that you truly *Fear God, honour and obey the King, love your brethren, and live in peace and charity with all men; herein continually exercising your self to have a conscience void of offence toward God and man.* By such a truly religious and holy life, you will adorn your profession, bring honour to the Church, gain upon its enemies, or stop their mouths, and even force them to acknowledg that God is in you of a truth, that certainly this is a true Christian Church, whose members are of such a truly Christian temper and behaviour. By this means you will best be secured from all that lye in wait to deceive, whether Papists or Separatists. Your own inward sense and relish of Divine things will assure you that true Religion consists not in bodily exercises, how pompous, costly and laborious soever. Nor will you fansie the power of Godliness to be manifested, by wrangling against such Forms and Ceremonies as are in themselves no hinderance to Spiritual Worship and Devotion, but may be an help. Yea by this means you will certainly obtain Eternal happiness, which

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can no other way be ſecured. For being of the true Church, will never ſave him that is not a true Chriſtian, which no wicked man is; nor will right opinions make amends for bad manners. Whereas he that heartily and honeſtly endeavours in all things to know and do the will of God, ſhall either be preſerved from error, or from being much hurt by it. For thoſe miſtakes which neither proceed from a vicious temper of mind, nor lead to any evil practice in a mans life, are not like to be very hurtful to himſelf or to others. To conclude then, *Let your converſation in all reſpects be ſuch as becomes the Goſpel of Chriſt, and be ſtedfaſt, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, being aſſured that your labour ſhall not be in vain in the Lord.*

L. *I do again and again return you moſt hearty thanks for all the good counſel you have given me, and do ſincerely reſolve by Gods help to follow it, for which purpoſe I beg the aſſiſtance of your prayers.*

T. That I do faithfully promiſe you, and do alſo deſire yours, that I my ſelf may obſerve the directions I have given, and not contradict them by an evil example. And God grant that all thoſe every where, *who take Chriſts name into their mouths may depart from all iniquity.* And may the Holy Spirit of Truth lead us all into, and keep us in thoſe ways of truth and peace, and ſerious holineſs, which may bring honour to God and to our Religion, and procure us true comfort here, and eternal glory hereafter, through the mercies of God in Jeſus Chriſt, to whoſe guidance I commit you, and bid you heartily farewel.

L. *God Almighty hear your Prayers, bleſs your Inſtructions, and plenteouſly reward you for all your kindneſs and pains, and grant us an happy meeting in that bleſſed world above, where we ſhall never part more. Farewel, Dear Sir.*

FINIS.